

HARRISON'S
British Classics.

VOL. VIII.

Containing

The Idler,

Fitzosborne's Letters,

Shenstone's Essays,

Launcelot Temple's Sketches,

And the Lover.



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Printed for J. Walker, N.º 16, Rossmans Street.

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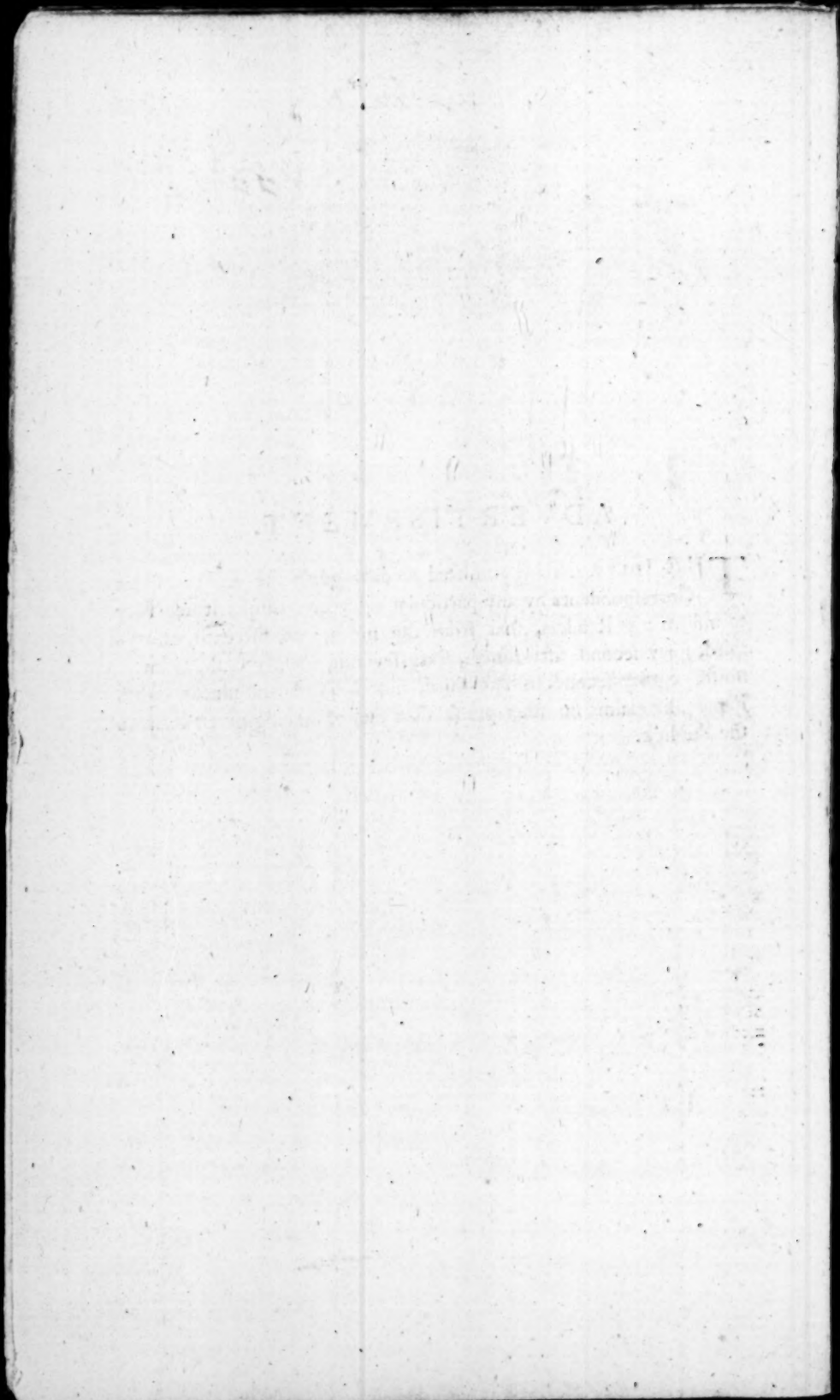
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F I N I S.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE IDLER having omitted to distinguish the Essays of his Correspondents by any particular signature, thinks it necessary to inform his Readers, that from the ninth, the fifteenth, thirty-third, forty-second, fifty-fourth, sixty-seventh, seventy-sixth, seventy-ninth, eighty-second, ninety-third, ninety-sixth, and ninety-eighth Papers, he claims no other praise than that of having given them to the Publick.





THE
I D L E R.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

N^o I. SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1758.

VACUI SUB UMERA
LUSIVUS.

HOR.

THOSE who attempt periodical Essays seem to be often stopped in the beginning, by the difficulty of finding a proper title. Two writers, since the time of the Spectator, have assumed his name, without any pretensions to lawful inheritance; an effort was once made to revive the Tatler; and the strange appellations, by which other papers have been called, shew that the authors were distressed, like the natives of America, who come to the Europeans to beg a name.

It will be easily believed of the Idler, that if this title had required any search, he never would have found it. Every mode of life has its conveniencies. The Idler, who habituates himself to be satisfied with what he can most easily obtain, not only escapes labours which are often fruitless, but sometimes succeeds better than those who despise all that is within their reach, and think every thing more valuable as it is harder to be acquired.

If similitude of manners be a motive to kindness, the Idler may flatter himself with universal patronage. There is no single character under which such numbers are comprised. Every man is,

or hopes to be, an Idler. Even those who seem to differ most from us are hastening to increase our fraternity? as peace is the end of war, so to be idle is the ultimate purpose of the busy.

There is perhaps no appellation by which a writer can better denote his kindred to the human species. It has been found hard to describe Man by an adequate definition. Some philosophers have called him a reasonable animal, but others have considered reason as a quality of which many creatures partake. He has been termed likewise a laughing animal; but it is said that some men have never laughed. Perhaps Man may be more properly distinguished as an Idle animal; for there is no man who is not sometimes idle. It is at least a definition from which none that shall find it in this paper can be excepted; for who can be more idle than the reader of the Idler.

That the definition may be complete, Idleness must be not only the general, but the peculiar characteristic of man; and perhaps man is the only being that can properly be called Idle, that does by others what he might do himself, or sacrifices duty or pleasure to the love of ease.
Scarcely

Scarcely any name can be imagined from which less envy or competition is to be dreaded. The Idler has no rivals or enemies. The man of business forgets him; the man of enterprise despises him; and though such as tread the same track of life, fall commonly into jealousy and discord, Idlers are always found to associate in peace; and he who is most famed for doing nothing, is glad to meet another as idle as himself.

What is to be expected from this Paper, whether it will be uniform or various, learned or familiar, serious or gay, political or moral, continued or interrupted, it is hoped that no reader will enquire. That the Idler has some scheme, cannot be doubted; for to form schemes is the Idler's privilege. But though he has many projects in his head, he is now grown sparing of communication, having observed, that his hearers are apt to remember what he forgets himself; that his tardiness of execution exposes him to the encroachments of those who catch a hint and fall to work; and that very specious plans, after long contrivance and pompous displays, have subsided in weariness without a trial, and without miscarriage have been blasted by derision.

Something the Idler's character may be supposed to promise. Those that are curious after diminutive history, who watch the revolutions of families, and the rise and fall of characters either male or female, will hope to be gratified by this Paper; for the Idler is always inquisitive, and seldom retentive. He

that delights in obliquity and satire, and wishes to see clouds gathering over any reputation that dazzles him with its brightness, will snatch up the Idler's Essays with a beating heart. The Idler is naturally censorious; those who attempt nothing themselves think every thing easily performed, and consider the unsuccessful always as criminal.

I think it necessary to give notice, that I make no contract, nor incur any obligation. If those who depend on the Idler for intelligence and entertainment, should suffer the disappointment which commonly follows ill-placed expectations, they are to lay the blame only on themselves.

Yet hope is not wholly to be cast away. The Idler, though sluggish, is yet alive, and may sometimes be stimulated to vigour and activity. He may descend into profoundness, or tower into sublimity; for the diligence of an Idler is rapid and impetuous, as ponderous bodies forced into velocity move with violence proportionate to their weight.

But these vehement exertions of intellect cannot be frequent, and he will therefore gladly receive help from any correspondent, who shall enable him to please without his own labour. He excludes no style, he prohibits no subjects; only let him that writes to the Idler remember, that his letters must not be long; no words are to be squandered in declarations of esteem, or confessions of inability; conscious dulness has little right to be prolix, and praise is not so welcome to the Idler as quiet.

№ II. SATURDAY, APRIL 22.

TOTO VIQ QUATER ANNO
MEMERANAM

HOR.

MANY positions are often on the tongue, and seldom in the mind; there are many truths which every human being acknowledges and forgets. It is generally known, that he who expects much will be often disappointed; yet disappointment seldom cures us of expectation, or has any other effect than that of producing a moral sentence, or peevish exclamation. He that embarks in the voyage of life, will always wish to advance rather by the impulse of the wind, than the strokes of the oar; and

many founder in the passage, while they lie waiting for the gale that is to waft them to their wish.

It will naturally be suspected that the Idler has lately suffered some disappointment, and that he does not talk thus gravely for nothing. No man is required to betray his own secrets. I will, however, confess, that I have now been a Writer almost a week, and have not yet heard a single word of praise, nor received one hint from any correspondent.

Whence

Whence this negligence proceeds I am not able to discover. Many of my predecessors have thought themselves obliged to return their acknowledgments in the second paper, for the kind reception of the first; and in a short time, apologies have become necessary to those ingenious gentlemen and ladies, whose performances, though in the highest degree elegant and learned, have been unavoidably delayed.

What, then, will be thought of me, who, having experienced no kindness, have no thanks to return; whom no gentleman or lady has yet enabled to give any cause of discontent, and who have therefore no opportunity of shewing how skilfully I can pacify resentment, extenuate negligence, or palliate rejection?

I have long known, that splendor of reputation is not to be counted among the necessities of life; and therefore shall not much repine if praise be withheld till it is better deserved. But surely I may be allowed to complain that, in a nation of Authors, not one has thought me worthy of notice, after so fair an invitation.

At the time when the rage of writing has seized the old and young, when the cook warbles her lyres in the kitchen, and the thrasher vociferates his heroics in the barn; when our traders deal out knowledge in bulky volumes, and our girls forsake their samplers to teach kingdoms wisdom; it may seem very unnecessary to draw any more from their proper occupations, by affording new opportunities of literary fame.

I should be indeed unwilling to find that, for the sake of corresponding with the Idler, the smith's iron had cooled on the anvil, or the spinster's distaff stood unemployed. I solicit only the contributions of those who have already devoted themselves to literature, or, without any determinate attention, wander at large through the expanse of life; and wear out the day in hearing at one place, what they utter at another.

Of these, a great part are already writers. One has a friend in the country upon whom he exercises his powers; whose passions he raises and depresses; whose understanding he perplexes with paradoxes, or strengthens by argument; whose admiration he courts, whose praises he enjoys; and who serves him instead of a senate or a theatre, as the

young soldiers in the Roman camp learned the use of their weapons by fencing again a post in the place of an enemy.

Another has his pockets filled with essays, and epigrams, which he reads, from house to house, to select parties; and which his acquaintances are daily entreating him to withhold no longer from the impatience of the public.

If, among these, any one is persuaded that, by such preludes of composition, he has qualified himself to appear in the open world, and is yet afraid of those censures which they who have already written, and they who cannot write, are equally ready to fulminate against public pretenders to fame, he may, by transmitting his performances to the Idler, make a cheap experiment of his abilities, and enjoy the pleasure of success, without the hazard of miscarriage.

Many advantages, not generally known, arise from this method of stealing on the public. The standing author of the paper is always the object of critical malignity. Whatever is mean will be imputed to him, and whatever is excellent be ascribed to his assistants. It does not much alter the event, that the author and his correspondents are equally unknown; for the author, whoever he be, is an individual, of whom every reader has some fixed idea, and whom he is therefore unwilling to gratify with applause; but the praises given to his correspondents are scattered in the air, none can tell on whom they will light, and therefore none are unwilling to bestow them.

He that is known to contribute to a periodical work, needs no other caution than not to tell what particular pieces are his own: such secrecy is indeed very difficult; but if it can be maintained, it is scarcely to be imagined, at how small an expence he may grow considerable.

A person of quality, by a single paper, may engross the honour of a volume. Fame is indeed dealt with a hand less and less bounteous through the subordinate ranks, till it descends to the professed author, who will find it very difficult to get more than he deserves; but every man who does not want it, or who needs not value it, may have liberal allowances; and, for five letters

B in

in the year sent to the Idler, of which perhaps only two are printed, will be promoted to the first rank of writers by those who are weary of the present race

of wits, and wish to sink them into obscurity before the lustre of a name not yet known enough to be detested.

Nº III. SATURDAY, APRIL 29.

OTIA VITÆ
SOLAMUR CANTU.

STAT.

IT has long been the complaint of those who frequent the theatres, that all the dramatic art has been long exhausted, and that the vicissitudes of fortune, and accidents of life, have been shewn in every possible combination, till the first scene informs us of the last, and the play no sooner opens, than every auditor knows how it will conclude. When a conspiracy is formed in a tragedy, we guess by whom it will be detected; when a letter is dropt in a comedy, we can tell by whom it will be found. Nothing is now left for the poet but character and sentiment, which are to make their way as they can, without the soft anxiety of suspense, or the enlivening agitation of surprize.

A new paper lies under the same disadvantage as a new play. There is danger left it be new without novelty. My earlier predecessors had their choice of vices and follies, and selected such as were most likely to raise merriment or attract attention; they had the whole field of life before them, untrodden and unsurveyed; characters of every kind shot up in their way, and those of the most luxuriant growth, or most conspicuous colours, were naturally cropt by the first sickle. They that follow are forced to peep into neglected corners, to note the casual varieties of the same species, and to recommend themselves by minute industry, and distinctions too subtle for common eyes.

Sometimes it may happen, that the haste or negligence of the first enquirers, has left enough behind to reward another search; sometimes new objects start up under the eye, and he that is looking for one kind of matter, is amply gratified by the discovery of another. But still it must be allowed, that, as more is taken, less can remain, and every truth brought newly to light, impoverishes the mine, from which succeeding intellects are to dig their treasures.

Many philosophers imagine that the elements themselves may be in time exhausted; that the sun, by shining long, will effuse all it's light; and that, by the continual waste of aqueous particles, the whole earth will at last become a sandy desert.

I would not advise my readers to disturb themselves by contriving how they shall live without light and water. For the days of universal thirst and perpetual darkness are at a great distance. The ocean and the sun will last our time, and we may leave posterity to shift for themselves.

But if the stores of Nature are limited, much more narrow bounds must be set to the modes of life; and mankind may want a moral or amusing paper, many years before they shall be deprived of drink or day-light. This want, which to the busy and the inventive may seem easily remediable by some substitute or other, the whole race of Idlers will feel with all the sensibility that such torpid animals can suffer.

When I consider the innumerable multitudes that, having no motive of desire, or determination of will, lie freezing in perpetual inactivity, till some external impulse puts them in motion; who awake in the morning, vacant of thought, with minds gaping for the intellectual food, which some kind essayist has been accustomed to supply; I am moved by the commiseration with which all human beings ought to behold the distresses of each other, to try some expedients for their relief, and to enquire by what methods the listless may be actuated, and the empty be replenished.

There are said to be pleasures in madness known only to madmen. There are certainly miseries in idleness, which the Idler only can conceive. These miseries I have often felt, and often bewailed. I know, by experience, how welcome is every avocation that

that summons the thoughts to a new image; and how much langour and lassitude are relieved by that officiousness which offers a momentary amusement to him who is unable to find it for himself.

It is naturally indifferent to this race of men what entertainment they receive, so they are but entertained. They catch, with equal eagerness at a moral lecture, or the memoirs of a robber; a prediction of the appearance of a comet, or the calculation of the chances of a lottery.

They might therefore easily be pleased, if they consulted only their own minds; but those who will not take the trouble to think for themselves, have always somebody that thinks for them; and the difficulty in writing is to please those from whom others learn to be pleased.

Much mischief is done in the world with very little interest or design. He that assumes the character of a critic, and justifies his claim by perpetual censure, imagines that he is hurting none

but the author, and him he considers as a pestilent animal, whom every other being has a right to persecute; little does he think how many harmless men he involves in his own guilt, by teaching them to be noxious without malignity, and to repeat objections which they do not understand; or how many honest minds he debars from pleasure, by exciting an artificial fastidiousness, and making them too wise to concur with their own sensations. He who is taught by a critic to dislike that which pleased him in his natural state, has the same reason to complain of his instructor, as the madman to rail at his doctor, who, when he thought himself master of Peru, physicked him to poverty.

If men will struggle against their own advantage, they are not to expect that the Idler will take much pains upon them; he has himself to please as well as them, and has long learned, or endeavoured to learn, not to make the pleasure of others too necessary to his own.

Nº IV. SATURDAY, MAY 6.

Πάσις γὰρ Φίλειται.

HOM.

CHARITY, or tenderness for the poor, which is now justly considered, by a great part of mankind, as inseparable from piety, and in which almost all the goodness of the present age consists, is, I think, known only to those who enjoy, either immediately or by transmission, the light of revelation.

Those ancient nations who have given us the wisest models of government, and the brightest examples of patriotism, whose institutions have been transcribed by all succeeding legislators, and whose history is studied by every candidate for political or military reputation, have yet left behind them no mention of almshouses or hospitals, of places where age might repose, or sickness be relieved.

The Roman emperors, indeed, gave large donatives to the citizens and soldiers, but these distributions were always reckoned rather popular than virtuous: nothing more was intended than an ostentation of liberality, nor was any recompence expected, but suffrages and acclamations.

Their beneficence was merely occasional; he that ceased to need the favour of the people, ceased likewise to court it; and therefore, no man thought it either necessary or wise to make any standing provision for the needy, to look forwards to the wants of posterity, or to secure successions of charity, for successions of distress.

Compassion is by some reasoners, on whom the name of philosophers has been too easily conferred, resolved into an affection merely selfish, an involuntary perception of pain at the involuntary sight of a being like ourselves languishing in misery. But this sensation, if ever it be felt at all from the brute instinct of un instructed nature, will only produce effects desultory and transient; it will never settle into a principle of action, or extend relief to calamities unseen, in generations not yet in being.

The devotion of life or fortune to the succour of the poor, is a height of virtue, to which humanity has never risen by its own power. The charity of the

Mahometans is a precept which their teacher evidently transplanted from the doctrines of Christianity; and the care with which some of the Oriental sects attend, as is said, to the necessities of the diseased and indigent, may be added to the other arguments, which prove Zoroaster to have borrowed his institutions from the law of Moses.

The present age, though not likely to shine hereafter among the most splendid periods of history, has yet given examples of Charity, which may be very properly recommended to imitation. The equal distribution of wealth, which long commerce has produced, does not enable any single hand to raise edifices of piety like fortified cities, to appropriate manors to religious uses, or deal out such large and lasting beneficence as was scattered over the land in ancient times, by those who possessed counties or provinces. But no sooner is a new species of misery brought to view, and a design of relieving it professed, than every hand is open to contribute something, every tongue is busied in solicitation, and every art of pleasure is employed for a time in the interest of virtue.

The most apparent and pressing miseries incident to man, have now their peculiar houses of reception and relief; and there are few among us raised however little above the danger of poverty, who may not justly claim, what is implored by the Mahometans in their most ardent benedictions, the prayers of the poor.

Among those actions which the mind can most securely review with unabated pleasure, is that of having contributed to an hospital for the sick. Of some kinds of Charity the consequences are dubious; some evils which beneficence has been busy to remedy, are not certainly known to be very grievous to the sufferer, or detrimental to the community; but no man can question whether wounds and sickness are not really painful; whether it be not worthy of a good man's care to restore those to ease and usefulness, from whose labour infants

and women expect their bread, and who, by a casual hurt, or lingering disease, lie pining in want and anguish, burthensome to others, and weary of themselves.

Yet as the hospitals of the present time subsist only by gifts bestowed at pleasure, without any solid fund of support, there is danger lest the blaze of Charity, which now burns with so much heat and splendour, should die away for want of lasting fuel; lest Fashion should suddenly withdraw her smile, and Inconstancy transfer the public attention to something which may appear more eligible, because it will be new.

Whatever is left in the hands of Chance must be subject to vicissitude; and when any establishment is found to be useful, it ought to be the next care to make it permanent.

But man is a transitory being, and his designs must partake of the imperfections of their author. To confer duration is not always in our power. We must snatch the present moment, and employ it well, without too much solicitude for the future, and content ourselves with reflecting that our part is performed. He that waits for an opportunity to do much at once, may breathe out his life in idle wishes, and regret, in the last hour, his useless intentions, and barren zeal.

The most active promoters of the present schemes of Charity cannot be cleared from some instances of misconduct, which may awaken contempt or censure, and hasten that neglect which is likely to come too soon of itself. The open competitions between different hospitals, and the animosity with which their patrons oppose one another, may prejudice weak minds against them all. For it will not be easily believed, that any man can, for good reasons, wish to exclude another from doing good. The spirit of Charity can only be continued by a reconciliation of these ridiculous feuds; and therefore, instead of contentions who shall be the only benefactors to the needy, let there be no other struggle than who shall be the first.

N^O. V. SATURDAY, MAY 17.

Κάλλος

Ἄν' ἀγῶνι ἀπάντων

Ἄν' ἀσπίδι ἀπατῶν.

ANAC.

OUR military operations are at last begun; our troops are marching in all the pomp of war, and a camp is marked out on the Isle of Wight; the heart of every Englishman now swells with confidence, though somewhat softened by generous compassion for the consternation and distresses of our enemies.

This formidable armament and splendid march produce different effects upon different minds, according to the boundless diversities of temper, occupation, and habits of thought.

Many a tender maiden considers her lover as already lost, because he cannot reach the camp but by crossing the sea; men, of a more political understanding, are persuaded that we shall now see, in a few days, the ambassadors of France supplicating for pity. Some are hoping for a bloody battle, because a bloody battle makes a vendible narrative; some are composing songs of victory; some planning arches of triumph; and some are mixing fire-works for the celebration of a peace.

Of all extensive and complicated objects different parts are selected by different eyes; and minds are variously affected, as they vary their attention. The care of the public is now fixed upon our soldiers, who are leaving their native country to wander, none can tell how long, in the pathless desarts of the Isle of Wight. The tender sigh for their sufferings, and the gay drink to their success. I, who look, or believe myself to look, with more philosophic eyes on human affairs, must confess, that I saw the troops march with little emotion; my thoughts were fixed upon other scenes, and the tear stole into my eyes, not for those who were going away, but for those who were left behind.

We have no reason to doubt but our troops will proceed with proper caution; there are men among them who can take care of themselves. But how shall the ladies endure without them? By what arts can they, who have long had no joy but from the civilities of a sol-

dier, now amuse their hours, and solace their separation?

Of fifty thousand men, now destined to different stations, if we allow each to have been occasionally necessary only to four women, a short computation will inform us, that two hundred thousand ladies are left to languish in distress; two hundred thousand ladies, who must run to sales and auctions without an attendant; sit at the play, without a critic to direct their opinion; buy their fans by their own judgment; dispose shells by their own invention; walk in the mall without a gallant; go to the gardens without a protector; and shuffle cards with vain impatience, for want of a fourth to complete the party.

Of these ladies, some, I hope, have lap-dogs, and some monkies; but they are unsatisfactory companions. Many useful offices are performed by men of scarlet, to which neither dog nor monkey has adequate abilities. A parrot, indeed, is as fine as a colonel; and if he has been much used to good company, is not wholly without conversation; but a parrot, after all, is a poor little creature, and has neither sword nor shoulder-knot, can neither dance nor play at cards.

Since the soldiers must obey the call of their duty, and go to that side of the kingdom which faces France, I know not why the ladies, who cannot live without them, should not follow them. The prejudices and pride of man have long presumed the sword and spindle made for different hands, and denied the other sex to partake the grandeur of military glory. This notion may be consistently enough received in France, where the Salic Law excludes females from the throne; but we, who allow them to be sovereigns, may surely suppose them capable to be soldiers.

It were to be wished that some man, whose experience and authority might enforce regard, would propose that our encampments for the present year should comprise an equal number of men and women, who should march and fight in mingled

mingled bodies. If proper colonels were once appointed, and the drums ordered to beat for female volunteers, our regiments would soon be filled without the reproach or cruelty of an impress.

Of these heroines, some might serve on foot, under the denomination of the Female Buffs; and some on horseback, with the title of Lady Hussars.

What objections can be made to this scheme I have endeavored maturely to consider, and cannot find that a modern foldier has any duties, except that of obedience, which a lady cannot perform. If the hair has lost its powder, a lady has a puff; if a coat be spotted, a lady has a brush. Strength is of less importance since fire-arms have been used; blows of the hand are now seldom

exchanged; and what is there to be done in the charge or the retreat beyond the powers of a sprightly maiden?

Our masculine squadrons will not suppose themselves disgraced by their auxiliaries, till they have done something which women could not have done. The troops of Braddock never saw their enemies, and perhaps were defeated by women. If our American general had headed an army of girls, he might still have built a fort, and taken it. Had Minorca been defended by a female garrison, it might have been surrendered, as it was, without a breach; and I cannot but think, that seven thousand women might have ventured to look at Rochfort, sack a village, rob a vineyard, and return in safety.

Nº VI. SATURDAY, MAY 20.

Ταμίον ἀγέλης γυναικῶν ἡντιν.

GR. PRO.

THE lady who had undertaken to ride on one horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours, has compleated her journey in little more than two-thirds of the time stipulated, and was conducted through the last mile with triumphal honours. Acclamation shouted before her, and all the flowers of the Spring were scattered in her way.

Every heart ought to rejoice when true merit is distinguished with public notice. I am far from wishing either to the Amazon or her horse any diminution of happiness, or fame, and cannot but lament that they were not more amply and suitably rewarded.

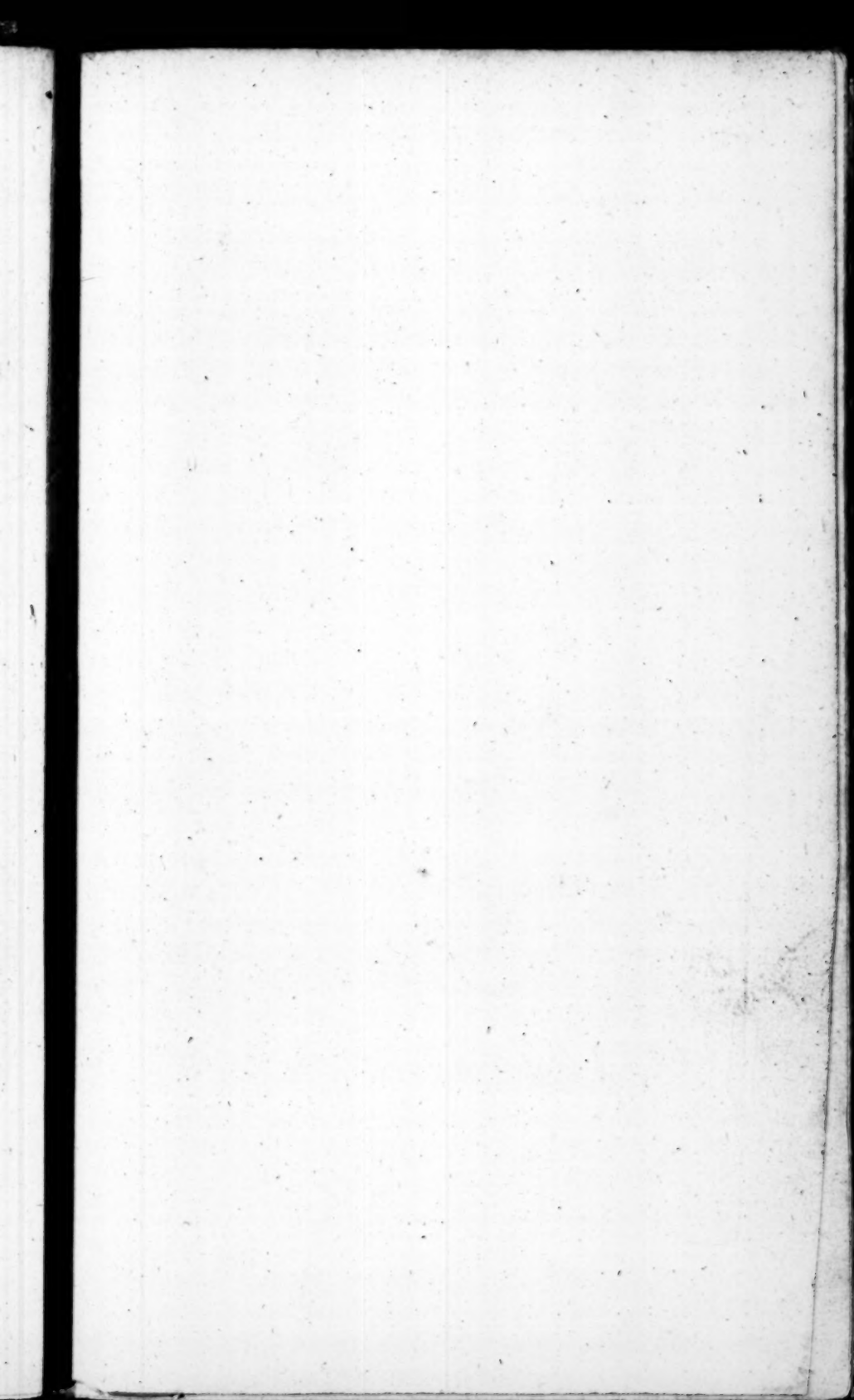
There was once a time when wreaths of bays or oak were considered as recompences equal to the most wearisome labours and terrific dangers, and when the miseries of long marches and stormy seas were at once driven from the remembrance by the fragrance of a garland.

If this heroine had been born in ancient time, she might perhaps have been delighted with the simplicity of ancient gratitude? or if any thing was wanting to full satisfaction, she might have supplied the deficiency with the hope of dedication, and anticipated the altars that would be raised, and the vows that would be made by future candidates

for equestrian glory, to the patroness of the race and the goddess of the stable.

But Fate reserved her for a more enlightened age, which has discovered leaves and flowers to be transitory things; which considers profit as the end of honour; and relates the event of every undertaking only by the money that is gained or lost. In these days, to strew the road with daisies and lilies, is to mock merit and delude hope. The toyman will not give his jewels, nor the mercer measure out his silks, for vegetable coin. A primrose, though picked up under the feet of the most renowned courser, will neither be received as a stake at cards, nor procure a seat at an opera, or buy candle for a rout, nor lace for a livery. And though there are many virtuosos, whose sole ambition is to possess something which can be found in no other hand, yet some are more accustomed to store their cabinets by theft than purchase, and none of them would either steal or buy one of the flowers of gratulation till he knows that all the rest are totally destroyed.

Little therefore did it avail this wonderful lady to be received, however joyfully, with such obsolete and barren ceremonies of praise. Had the way been covered with guineas, though but for the tenth part of the last mile she would have





P. F. Chenevix del.

Hatch sc.

have considered her skill and diligence as not wholly lost; and might have rejoiced in the speed and perseverance which had left her such superfluity of time, that she could at leisure gather her reward without the danger of Atalanta's miscarriage.

So much ground could not, indeed, have been paved with gold but at a large expence; and we are at present engaged in war, which demands and enforces frugality. But common rules are made only for common life, and some deviation from general policy may be allowed in favour of a lady, that rode a thousand miles in a thousand hours.

Since the spirit of antiquity so much prevails amongst us, that even on this great occasion we have given flowers instead of money, let us at least complete our imitation of the ancients, and endeavour to transmit to posterity the memory of that virtue, which we consider as superior to pecuniary recompence. Let an equestrian statue of this heroine be erected, near the starting-post on the heath of Newmarket, to fill kindred souls with emulation, and tell the grand-daughters of our grand-daughters what an English maiden has once performed.

As events, however illustrious, are soon obscured if they are intrusted to tradition, I think it necessary, that the pedestal should be inscribed with a concise account of this great performance. The composition of this narrative ought not to be committed rashly to improper hands. If the rhetoricians of Newmarket, who may be supposed likely to conceive in it's full strength the dignity of the subject, should undertake to express it, there is danger lest they admit some phrases which, though well understood

at present, may be ambiguous in another century. If posterity should read on a public monument, that *the lady carried her horse a thousand miles in a thousand hours*, they may think that the statue and inscription are at variance, because one will represent the horse as carrying his lady, and the other tell that the lady carried her horse.

Some doubts likewise may be raised by speculatists, and some controversies be agitated among historians, concerning the motive as well as the manner of the action. As it will be known, that this wonder was performed in a time of war, some will suppose that the lady was frightened by invaders, and fled to preserve her life or her chastity: others will conjecture, that she was thus honoured for some intelligence carried of the enemy's designs: some will think that she brought news of a victory; others, that she was commissioned to tell of a conspiracy; and some will congratulate themselves on their acuter penetration, and find, that all these notions of patriotism and public spirit are improbable and chimerical; they will confidently tell, that she only ran away from her guardians, and that the true causes of her speed were fear and love.

Let it therefore be carefully mentioned, that by this performance *she won her wager*; and, lest this should, by any change of manners seem an inadequate or incredible incitement, let it be added, that at this time the original motives of human actions had lost their influence; that the love of praise was extinct; the fear of infamy was become ridiculous; and the only wish of an Englishman was, to *win his wager*.

N° VII. SATURDAY, MAY 27.

ONE of the principal amusements of the Idler is to read the works of those minute historians the writers of news, who, though contemptuously overlooked by the compilers of bulky volumes, are yet necessary in a nation where much wealth produces much leisure, and one part of the people has nothing to do but to observe the lives and fortunes of the others.

To us, who are regaled every morning and evening with intelligence, and are supplied from day to day with mate-

rials for conversation, it is difficult to conceive how man can subsist without a news-paper, or to what entertainment companies can assemble, in those wide regions of the earth that have neither Chronicles nor Magazines, neither Gazettes nor Advertisers, neither Journals nor Evening Posts.

There are never great numbers in any nation, whose reason or invention can find employment for their tongues, who can raise a pleasing discourse from their own stock of sentiments and images; and

and those few who have qualified themselves by speculation for general disquisitions, are soon left without an audience. The common talk of men must relate to facts in which the talkers have, or think they have, an interest; and where such facts cannot be known, the pleasures of society will be merely sensual. Thus the natives of the Mahometan empires, who approach most nearly to European civility, have no higher pleasure at their convivial assemblies than to hear a piper, or gaze upon a tumbler, and no company can keep together longer than they are diverted by sounds or shows.

All foreigners remark, that the knowledge of the common people of England is greater than that of any other vulgar. This superiority we undoubtedly owe to the rivulets of intelligence, which are continually trickling among us, which every one may catch, and of which every one partakes.

This universal diffusion of instruction is, perhaps, not wholly without its inconveniences; it certainly fills the nation with superficial disputants; enables those to talk who were born to work; and affords information sufficient to elate vanity and stiffen obstinacy, but too little to enlarge the mind into complete skill for full comprehension.

Whatever is found to gratify the public, will be multiplied by the emulation of venders beyond necessity or use. This plenty indeed produces cheapness, but cheapness always ends in negligence and depravation.

The compilation of news-papers is often committed to narrow and mercenary minds, not qualified for the task of delighting or instructing; who are content to fill their paper, with whatever matter, without industry to gather, or discernment to select.

Thus journals are daily multiplied without increase of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning. These repetitions, indeed, waste time, but they do not shorten it. The most eager peruser of news is tired before he has completed his labour, and many a man who enters the coffee-house in his night-gown and slippers, is called away to his shop, or his dinner, before he has well considered the state of Europe.

It is discovered by Reaumur, that

spiders might make silk, if they could be persuaded to live in peace together. The writers of news, if they could be confederated, might give more pleasure to the public. The morning and evening authors might divide an event between them; a single action, and that not of much importance, might be gradually discovered, so as to vary a whole week with joy, anxiety, and conjecture.

We know that a French ship of war was lately taken by a ship of England; but this event was suffered to burst upon us all at once, and then what we knew already was echoed from day to day, and from week to week.

Let us suppose these spiders of literature to spin together, and enquire to what an extensive web such another event might be regularly drawn, and how six morning and six evening writers might agree to retail their articles.

On *Monday Morning* the captain of a ship might arrive, who left the Friseur of France, and the Bulldog, Captain Grim, in sight of one another, so that an engagement seemed unavoidable.

Monday Evening. A sound of cannon was heard off Cape Finisterre, supposed to be those of the Bulldog and Friseur.

Tuesday Morning. It was this morning reported that the Bulldog engaged the Friseur, yard-arm and yard-arm, three glasses and a half, but was obliged to sheer off for want of powder. It is hoped that enquiry will be made into this affair in a proper place.

Tuesday Evening. The account of the engagement between the Bulldog and Friseur was premature.

Wednesday Morning. Another express is arrived, which brings news, that the Friseur had lost all her masts, and three hundred of her men, in the late engagement; and that Captain Grim is come into harbour much shattered.

Wednesday Evening. We hear that the brave Captain Grim, having expended his powder, proposed to enter the Friseur sword in hand; but that his lieutenant, the nephew of a certain nobleman, remonstrated against it.

Thursday Morning. We wait impatiently for a full account of the late engagement between the Bulldog and Friseur.

Thursday Evening. It is said that the Order of the Bath will be sent to Captain Grim.

Friday Morning. A certain lord of the

the Admiralty has been heard to say of a certain captain, that if he had done his duty, a certain French ship might have been taken. It was not thus that merit was rewarded in the days of Cromwell.

Friday Evening. There is certain information at the Admiralty, that the *Friseur* is taken, after a resistance of about two hours.

Saturday Morning. A letter from one of the gunners of the *Bulldog* mentions the taking of the *Friseur*, and attributes their success wholly to the

bravery and resolution of Captain Grim, who never owed any of his advancement to borough-jobbers, or any other corrupters of the people.

Saturday Evening. Captain Grim arrived at the Admiralty, with an account that he engaged the *Friseur*, a ship of equal force with his own, off Cape Finisterre, and took her after an obstinate resistance, having killed one hundred and fifty of the French, with the loss of ninety-five of his own men.

N^o VIII. SATURDAY, JUNE 3.

TO THE IDLER.

IN time of publick danger, it is every man's duty to withdraw his thoughts in some measure from his private interest, and employ part of his time for the general welfare. National conduct ought to be the result of national wisdom, a plan formed by mature consideration and diligent selection out of all the schemes which may be offered, and all the information which can be procured.

In a battle, every man should fight as if he was the single champion; in preparations for war, every man should think, as if the last event depended on his counsel. None can tell what discoveries are within his reach, or how much he may contribute to the public safety.

Full of these considerations, I have carefully reviewed the process of the war, and find, what every other man has found, that we have hitherto added nothing to our military reputation: that at one time we have been beaten by enemies whom we did not see; and at another, have avoided the sight of enemies, lest we should be beaten.

Whether our troops are defective in discipline or in courage, is not very useful to inquire: they evidently want something necessary to success: and he that shall supply that want will deserve well of his country.

To learn of an enemy has always been accounted politic and honourable, and therefore I hope it will raise no prejudices against my project, to confess that I borrowed it from a Frenchman.

When the Isle of Rhodes was, many centuries ago, in the hands of that military order now called the Knights of Malta, it was ravaged by a Dragon, who inhabited a den under a rock, from which he issued forth when he was hungry or wanton, and without fear or mercy devoured men and beasts as they came in his way. Many councils were held, and many devices offered, for his destruction; but as his back was armed with impenetrable scales, none would venture to attack him. At last Dudon, a French knight, undertook the deliverance of the island. From some place of security he took a view of the dragon, or, as a modern soldier would say, *reconnoitred* him, and observed that his belly was naked and vulnerable. He then returned home to take his *arrangements*; and, by a very exact imitation of nature, made a dragon of pasteboard, in the belly of which he put beef and mutton, and accustomed two sturdy mastiffs to feed themselves, by tearing their way to the concealed flesh. When his dogs were well practised in this method of plunder, he marched out with them at his heels, and shewed them the dragon; they rushed upon him in quest of their dinner; Dudon battered his scull, while they lacerated his belly; and neither his sting nor claws were able to defend him.

Something like this might be practised in our present state. Let a fortification be raised on Salisbury Plain, resembling Brest, or Toulon, or Paris itself, with all the usual preparations for defence: let the inclosure be filled with beef and ale: let the soldiers from some proper eminence, see shirts waving upon lines

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and here and there a plump landlady hurrying about with pots in her hands. When they are sufficiently animated to advance, lead them in exact order, with fife and drum, to that side whence the wind blows, till they came within the scent of roast meat and tobacco. Contrive that they may approach the place fasting about an hour after dinner-time, assure them that there is no danger, and command an attack.

If nobody within either moves or speaks, it is not unlikely that they may carry the place by storm; but if a panic should seize them, it will be proper to defer the enterprise to a more hungry hour. When they have entered, let them fill their bellies and return to the camp.

On the next day let the same place be shewn them again, but with some additions of strength or terror. I cannot pretend to inform our generals through what gradations of danger they shall train their men to fortitude. They best know what the soldiers and what themselves can bear. It will be proper that the war should every day vary its appearance. Sometimes as they mount the rampart, a cook may throw fat upon the fire, to accustom them to a sudden blaze; and sometimes, by the clatter of empty pots, they may be insured to formidable noises. But let it never be forgotten, that victory must repose with a full belly.

In time it will be proper to bring our French prisoners from the coast, and

place them upon the walls in martial order. At their first appearance their hands must be tied, but they may be allowed to grin. In a month they may guard the place with their hands loosed, provided that on pain of death they be forbidden to strike.

By this method our army will soon be brought to look an enemy in the face. But it has been lately observed, that fear is received by the ear as well as the eyes, and the Indian war-cry is represented as too dreadful to be endured; as a sound that will force the bravest veteran to drop his weapon, and desert his rank; that will deafen his ear, and chill his breast; that will neither suffer him to hear orders or to feel shame, or retain any sensibility but the dread of death.

That the savage clamours of naked barbarians should thus terrify troops disciplined to war, and ranged in array with arms in their hands, is surely strange. But this is no time to reason. I am of opinion, that by a proper mixture of asses, bulls, turkeys, geese, and tragedians, a noise might be procured equally horrid with the war-cry. When our men have been encouraged by frequent victories, nothing will remain but to qualify them for extreme danger, by a sudden concert of terrific vociferation. When they have endured this last trial, let them be led to action, as men who are no longer to be frightened; as men who can bear at once the grimaces of the Gauls, and the howl of the Americans.

№ IX. SATURDAY, JUNE 10.

TO THE IDLER.

I HAVE read you; that is a favour few authors can boast of having received from me besides yourself. My intention in telling you of it is to inform you, that you have both pleased and angered me. Never did writer appear so delightful to me as you did when you adopted the name of the Idler. But what a fallings-off was there when your first production was brought to light! A natural irresistible attachment to that favourable passion, *idling*, had led me to hope for indulgence from the Idler, but I find him a stranger to the title.

What rules has he proposed totally to unbrace the slackened nerve; to shade the heavy eye of inattention; to give the smooth feature and the uncontracted muscles; or procure insensibility to the whole animal composition.

These were some of the placid blessings I promised myself the enjoyment of, when I committed violence upon myself, by mustering up all my strength to set about reading you; but I am disappointed in them all; and the stroke of eleven in the morning is still as terrible to me as before, and I find putting on my cloaths still as painful and laborious. Oh that our climate would permit that original nakedness which the thrice happy

happy Indians to this day enjoy! How many unsollicitous hours should I bask away, warmed in bed by the sun's glorious beams, could I, like them, tumble from thence in a moment, when necessity obliges me to endure the torment of getting upon my legs.

But wherefore do I talk to you upon subjects of this delicate nature; you who seem ignorant of the inexpressible charms of the elbow-chair, attended with a soft stool for the elevation of the feet. Thus, vacant of thought, do I indulge the live-long day.

You may define happiness as you please; I embrace that opinion which makes it consist in the absence of pain. To reflect is pain; to stir is pain; therefore I never reflect or stir but when I cannot help it. Perhaps you will call my scheme of life Indolence, and therefore think the Idler excused from taking any notice of me: but I have always looked upon Indolence and Idleness as the same; and so desire you will now and then, while you profess yourself of our fraternity, take some notice of me, and others in my situation, who think they have a right to your assistance; or relinquish the name.

You may publish, burn or destroy this, just as you are in the humour; it is ten to one but I forget that I wrote it, before it reaches you. I believe you may find a motto for it in Horace, but I cannot reach him without getting out of my chair; that is a sufficient reason for my not affixing any. And being obliged to sit upright to ring the bell for my servant to convey this to the penny-post, if I slip the opportunity of his being now in the room, makes me break off abruptly.

This correspondent, whoever he be, is not to be dismissed without some tokens of regard. There is no mark more certain of a genuine Idler, than uneasiness without molestation, and complaint without a grievance.

Yet my gratitude to the contributor of half a paper shall not wholly overpower my sincerity. I must inform you, that, with all his pretensions, he that calls for directions to be idle, is yet but in the rudiments of Idleness, and has attained neither the practice nor theory of wasting life. The true nature of Idleness he will know in time, by continuing to be idle. Virgil tells us of

an impetuous and rapid being, that acquires strength by motion. The Idler acquires weight by lying still.

The *vis inertiae*, the quality of resisting all external impulse, is hourly increasing; the restless and troublesome faculties of attention and distinction, reflection on the past, and solicitude for the future, by a long indulgence of Idleness, will, like tapers in unelastic air, be gradually extinguished; and the officious lover, the vigilant soldier, the busy trader, may, by a judicious composure of his mind, sink into a state approaching to that of brute matter; in which he shall retain the consciousness of his own existence, only by an obtuse languor, and drowsy discontent.

This is the lowest stage to which the favourites of Idleness can descend; these regions of undelighted quiet can be entered by few. Of those that are preparing to sink down into their shade, some are roused into action by Avarice or Ambition, some are awakened by the voice of Fame, some allured by the smile of Beauty, and many with-held by the importunities of Want. Of all the enemies of Idleness, Want is the most formidable. Fame is soon found to be a sound, and Love a dream; Avarice and Ambition may be justly suspected of privy confederacies with Idleness; for when they have for a while protected their votaries, they often deliver them up to end their lives under her dominion. Want always struggles against Idleness, but Want herself is often overcome; and every hour shews the careful observer, those who had rather live in ease than in plenty.

So wide is the reign of Idleness, and so powerful her influence. But she does not immediately confer all her gifts. My correspondent, who seems, with all his errors, worthy of advice, must be told, that he is calling too hastily for the last effusion of total insensibility. Whatever he may have been taught by unskilful Idlers to believe, labour is necessary in this initiation to Idleness. He that never labours may know the pains of Idleness, but not the pleasure. The comfort is, that if he devotes himself to insensibility, he will daily lengthen the intervals of Idleness, and shorten those of labour, till at last he will lie down to rest, and no longer disturb the world or himself by bustle or competition.

Thus I have endeavoured to give him that information which, perhaps, after all, he did not want; for a true Idler

often calls for that which he knows is never to be had, and asks questions which he does not desire ever to be answered.

N^o X. SATURDAY, JUNE 17.

CREDULITY, or Confidence of opinion too great for the evidence from which opinion is derived, we find to be a general weakness imputed by every sect and party to all others, and indeed by every man to every other man.

Of all kinds of Credulity, the most obstinate and wonderful is that of political zealots; of men, who, being numbered, they know not how or why, in any of the parties that divide a state, resign the use of their own eyes and ears, and resolve to believe nothing that does not favour those whom they profess to follow.

The bigot of philosophy is seduced by authorities which he has not always opportunities to examine, is entangled in systems by which truth and falsehood are inextricably complicated, or undertakes to talk on subjects which nature did not form him able to comprehend.

The Cartesian, who denies that his horse feels the spur, or that the hare is afraid when the hounds approach her; the disciple of Malbranche, who maintains that the man was not hurt by the bullet, which, according to vulgar apprehension, swept away his legs; the follower of Berkeley, who, while he sits writing at his table, declares that he has neither table, paper, nor fingers; have all the honour at least of being deceived by fallacies not easily detected, and may plead that they did not forsake truth, but for appearances which they were not able to distinguish from it.

But the man who engages in a party has seldom to do with any thing remote or abstruse. The present state of things is before his eyes; and, if he cannot be satisfied without retrospection, yet he seldom extends his views beyond the historical events of the last century. All the knowledge that he can want is within his attainment, and most of the arguments which he can hear are within his capacity.

Yet so it is that an Idler meets every hour of his life with men who have different opinions upon every thing past, present, and future; why say the most

notorious facts, contradict the most cogent truths, and persist in asserting to-day what they asserted yesterday, in defiance of evidence, and contempt of confutation.

Two of my companions, who are grown old in idleness, are Tom Tempest and Jack Sneaker. Both of them consider themselves as neglected by their parties, and therefore entitled to credit, for why should they favour ingratitude? They are both men of integrity, where no factious interest is to be promoted; and both lovers of truth, when they are not heated with political debate.

Tom Tempest is a steady friend to the house of Stuart. He can recount the prodigies that have appeared in the sky, and the calamities that have afflicted the nation every year from the Revolution; and is of opinion, that if the exiled family had continued to reign, there would have neither been worms in our ships, nor caterpillars on our trees. He wonders that the nation was not awakened by the hard frost to a revocation of the true king, and is hourly afraid that the whole island will be lost in the sea. He believes that King William burned Whitehall, that he might steal the furniture, and that Tillotson died an atheist. Of Queen Anne he speaks with more tenderness, owns that she meant well, and can tell by whom and why she was poisoned. In the succeeding reigns all has been corruption, malice, and design. He believes that nothing ill has ever happened for these forty years by chance or error; he holds that the battle of Dettingen was won by mistake, and that of Fontenoy lost by contract; that the Victory was sunk by a private order; that Cornhill was fired by emissaries from the council; and the arch of Westminster Bridge was so contrived as to sink, on purpose that the nation might be put to charge. He considers the new road to Islington as an encroachment on liberty, and often asserts that *broad wheels* will be the ruin of England.

Tom is generally vehement and noisy, but

but nevertheless has some secrets, which he always communicates in a whisper. Many and many a time has Tom told me, in a corner, that our miseries were almost at an end, and that we should see, in a month, another monarch on the throne; the time elapses without a revolution; Tom meets me again with new intelligence; the whole scheme is now settled, and we shall see great events in another month.

Jack Sneaker is a hearty adherent to the present establishment; he has known those who saw the bed into which the Pretender was conveyed in a warming-pan. He often rejoices that the nation was not enslaved by the Irish. He believes that King William never lost a battle, and that if he had lived one year longer, he would have conquered France. He holds that Charles the First was a Papist. He allows there were some good men in the reign of Queen Anne; but the peace of Utrecht brought a blast upon the nation, and has been the cause of all the evil that we have suffered to the present hour. He believes that the scheme of the South Sea was well in-

tended, but that it miscarried by the influence of France. He considers a standing army as the bulwark of liberty, thinks us secured from corruption by septennial parliaments, relates how we are enriched and strengthened by the Electoral dominions, and declares that the public debt is a blessing to the nation.

Yet, amidst all this prosperity, poor Jack is hourly disturbed by the dread of Popery. He wonders that some stricter laws are not made against Papists, and is sometimes afraid that they are busy with French gold among the bishops and judges.

He cannot believe that the non-jurors are so quiet for nothing, they must certainly be forming some plot for the establishment of Popery; he does not think the present oaths sufficiently binding, and wishes that some better security could be found for the succession of Hanover. He is zealous for the naturalization of foreign Protestants, and rejoiced at the admission of the Jews to the English privileges, because he thought a Jew would never be a Papist.

Nº XL SATURDAY, JUNE 24.

IT is commonly observed, that when two Englishmen meet, their first talk is of the weather; they are in haste to tell each other, what each must already know, that it is hot or cold, bright or cloudy, windy or calm.

There are, among the numerous lovers of subtleties and paradoxes, some who derive the civil institutions of every country from its climate, who impute freedom and slavery to the temperature of the air, can fix the meridian of vice and virtue, and tell at what degree of latitude we are to expect courage or timidity, knowledge or ignorance.

From these dreams of idle speculation, a slight survey of life, and a little knowledge of history is sufficient to awaken any enquirer, whose ambition of distinction has not overpowered his love of truth. Forms of government are seldom the result of much deliberation; they are framed by chance in popular assemblies, or in conquered countries by despotic authority. Laws are often occasional, often capricious, made always by a few, and sometimes by a

single voice. Nations have changed their characters; slavery is now no where more patiently endured than in countries once inhabited by the zealots of liberty.

But national customs can arise only from general agreement; they are not imposed, but chosen and are continued only by the continuance of their cause. An Englishman's notice of the weather is the natural consequence of changeable skies and uncertain seasons. In many parts of the world, wet weather, and dry are regularly expected at certain periods; but in our island every man goes to sleep, unable to guess whether he shall behold in the morning a bright or cloudy atmosphere, whether his rest shall be lulled by a shower, or broken by a tempest. We therefore rejoice mutually at good weather, as at an escape from something that we feared, and mutually complain of bad, as of the loss of something that we hoped.

Such is the reason of our practice; and who shall treat it with contempt? Surely not the attendant on a court; whose bu-

business

finest is to watch the looks of a being weak and foolish as himself, and whose vanity is to recount the names of men, who might drop into nothing, and leave no vacancy: not the proprietor of funds, who stops his acquaintance in the street to tell him of the loss of half-a-crown; not the enquirer after news, who fills his head with foreign events, and talks of skirmishes and sieges, of which no consequence will ever reach his hearers or himself. The weather is a nobler and more interesting subject; it is the present state of the skies and of the earth, on which plenty and famine are suspended, on which millions depend for the necessities of life.

The weather is frequently mentioned for another reason, less honourable to my dear countrymen. Our dispositions too frequently change with the colour of the sky; and when we find ourselves cheerful and good natured, we naturally pay our acknowledgments to the powers of sun-shine; or if we sink into dullness and peevishness, look round the horizon for an excuse, and charge our discontent upon an easterly wind or a cloudy day.

Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reason, than to resign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependance on the weather and the wind, for the only blessings which Nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence. To look up to the sky for the nutriment of our bodies, is the condition of nature; to call upon the sun for peace and gaiety, or deprecate the clouds lest sorrow should overwhelm us, is the cowardice of Idleness, and the idolatry of Folly.

Yet, even in this age of enquiry and knowledge, when superstition is driven away, and omens and prodigies have lost their terrors, we find this folly countenanced by frequent examples. Those that laugh at the portentous glare of a

comet, and hear a crow with equal tranquillity from the right or left, will yet talk of times and situations proper for intellectual performances, will imagine the fancy exalted by vernal breezes, and the reason invigorated by a bright calm.

If men who have given up themselves to fanciful credulity would confine their conceits in their own minds, they might regulate their lives by the barometer, with inconvenience only to themselves; but to fill the world with accounts of intellects subject to ebb and flow, of one genius that awakened in the Spring, and another that ripened in the Autumn, of one mind expanded in the Summer, and of another concentrated in the Winter, is no less dangerous than to tell children of bugbears and goblins. Fear will find every house haunted, and Idleness will wait for ever for the moment of illumination.

This distinction of seasons is produced only by imagination operating on luxury. To temperance every day is bright, and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that shall resolutely excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will soon make himself superior to the seasons, and may set at defiance the morning mist, and the evening damp, the blasts of the east, and the clouds of the south.

It was the boast of the Stoic philosophy, to make man unshaken by calamity, and unelated by success, incorruptible by pleasure, and invulnerable by pain; these are heights of wisdom which none ever attained, and to which few can aspire; but there are lower degrees of constancy necessary to common virtue; and every man, however he may distrust himself in the extremes of good or evil, might at least struggle against the tyranny of the climate, and refuse to enslave his virtue or his reason to the most variable of all variations, the changes of the weather.

Nº XII. SATURDAY, JULY 1.

THAT every man is important in his own eyes is a position of which we all either voluntarily or unwarily at least once an hour confess the truth; and it will unavoidably follow, that every man believes himself important to the public.

The right which this importance gives us to general notice and visible distinction, is one of those disputable privileges which we have not always courage to assert; and which we therefore suffer to lie dormant till some elevation of mind, or vicissitude of fortune, incites

incites us to declare our pretensions and enforce our demands. And hopeless as the claim of vulgar characters may seem to the supercilious and severe, there are few who do not at one time or other endeavour to step forward beyond their rank, who do not make some struggles for fame, and shew that they think all other conveniences and delights imperfectly enjoyed without a name.

To get a name, can happen but to few. A name, even in the most commercial nation, is one of the few things which cannot be bought. It is the free gift of mankind, which must be deserved before it will be granted, and is at last unwillingly bestowed. But this unwillingness only encreases desire in him who believes his merit sufficient to overcome it.

There is a particular period of life, in which this fondness for a name seems principally to predominate in both sexes. Scarce any couple comes together, but the nuptials are declared in the newspapers with encomiums on each party. Many an eye, ranging over the page with eager curiosity in quest of statesmen and heroes, is stopped by a marriage celebrated between Mr. Buckram, an eminent salesman in Threadneedle Street, and Miss Dolly Juniper, the only daughter of an eminent distiller, of the parish of St. Giles's in the Fields, a young lady adorned with every accomplishment that can give happiness to the married state. Or we are told, amidst our impatience for the event of a battle, that on a certain day Mr. Winker, a tide-waiter at Yarmouth, was married to Mrs. Cackle, a widow lady of great accomplishments, and that as soon as the ceremony was performed they set out in a post-chaise for Yarmouth.

Many are the enquiries which such intelligence must undoubtedly raise, but nothing in this world is lasting. When the reader has contemplated with envy, or with gladness, the felicity of Mr. Buckram and Mr. Winker, and ransacked his memory for the names of Juniper and Cackle, his attention is diverted to other thoughts, by finding that Mirza will not cover this season; or that a spangie has been lost or stolen, that answers to the name of Ranger.

Whence it arises that on the day of marriage all agree to call thus openly for honours, I am not able to discover.

Some, perhaps, think it kind, by a public declaration, to put an end to the hopes of rivalry and the fears of jealousy; to let parents know that they may set their daughters at liberty whom they have locked up for fear of the bridegroom; or to dismiss to their counters and their offices the amorous youths that had been used to hover round the dwelling of the bride.

These connubial praises may have another cause. It may be the intention of the husband and wife to dignify themselves in the eyes of each other; and, according to their different tempers or expectations, to win affection, or enforce respect.

It was said of the family of Lucas, that it was *noble*, for all the brothers were valiant, and all the sisters were virtuous. What would a stranger say of the English nation, in which on the day of marriage all the men are *eminent*, and all the women *beautiful, accomplished, and rich*?

How long the wife will be persuaded of the eminence of her husband, or the husband continue to believe that his wife has the qualities required to make marriage happy, may reasonably be questioned. I am afraid that much time seldom passes before each is convinced that praises are fallacious, and particularly those praises which we confer upon ourselves.

I should therefore think, that this custom might be omitted without any loss to the community, and that the sons and daughters of lanes and alleys might go hereafter to the next church, with no witnesses of their worth or happiness but their parents and their friends; but if they cannot be happy on the bridal day without some gratification of their vanity, I hope they will be willing to encourage a friend of mine who proposes to devote his powers to their service.

Mr. Settle, a man whose *eminence* was once allowed by the *eminent*, and whose *accomplishments* were confessed by the *accomplished*, in the latter part of a long life supported himself by an uncommon expedient. He had a standing Elegy and Epithalamium, of which only the first and last were leaves varied occasionally, and the intermediate pages were, by general terms, left applicable alike to every character. When any marriage became known, Settle ran to the

the bridegroom with his Epithalamium; and when he heard of any death, ran to the heir with his Elegy.

Who can think himself disgraced by a trade that was practised so long by the rival of Dryden, by the poet whose Empress of Morocco was played before princes by ladies of the court?

My friend purposes to open an office in the Fleet for matrimonial panegy-

rics, and will accommodate all with praise who think their own powers of expression inadequate to their merit. He will sell any man or woman the virtue or qualification which is most fashionable or most desired; but desires his customers to remember, that he sets beauty at the highest price, and Riches at the next; and, if he be well paid, throws in Virtue for nothing.

Nº XII. SATURDAY, JULY 8.

TO THE IDLER.

DEAR MR. IDLER,

THOUGH few men of prudence are much inclined to interpose in disputes between man and wife, who commonly make peace at the expence of the arbitrator; yet I will venture to lay before you a controversy, by which the quiet of my house has been long disturbed, and which, unless you can decide it, is likely to produce lasting evils, and embitter those hours which Nature seems to have appropriated to tenderness and repose.

I married a wife with no great fortune, but of a family remarkable for domestic prudence, and elegant frugality. I lived with her at ease, if not with happiness, and seldom had any reason of complaint. The house was always clean, the servants were active and regular, dinner was on the table every day at the same minute, and the ladies of the neighbourhood were frightened when I invited their husbands, lest their own economy should be less esteemed.

During this gentle lapse of life, my dear brought me three daughters. I wished for a son to continue the family; but my wife often tells me the boys are dirty things, and are always troublesome in a house, and declares that she has hated the sight of them ever since she saw Lady Fondle's eldest son ride over a carpet with his hobby-horse all mire.

I did not much attend to her opinion, but knew that girls could not be made boys; and therefore composed myself to bear what I could not remedy, and resolved to bestow that care on my daughters, to which only the sons are commonly thought entitled.

But my wife's notions of education

differ widely from mine. She is an irreconcilable enemy to Idleness, and considers every state of life as Idleness, in which the hands are not employed, or some art acquired, by which she thinks money may be got or saved.

In pursuance of this principle, she calls up her daughters at a certain hour, and appoints them a task of needle-work to be performed before breakfast. They are confined in a garret, which has it's window in the roof, both because work is best done at a sky-light, and because children are apt to lose time by looking about them.

They bring down their work to breakfast, and as they deserve are commended or reproved; they are then sent up with a new task till dinner; if no company is expected, their mother sits with them the whole afternoon, to direct their operations, and to draw patterns, and is sometimes denied to her nearest relations when she is engaged in teaching them a new stitch.

By this continual exercise of their diligence, she has obtained a very considerable number of laborious performances. We have twice as many fire-screens as chimneys, and three flourished quilts for every bed. Half the rooms are adorned with a kind of *faisle pictures*, which imitate tapestry. But all their work is not set out to shew; she has boxes filled with knit garters and braided shoes. She has twenty covers for side-saddles embroidered with silver flowers, and has curtains wrought with gold in various figures, which she resolves some time or other to hang up. All these she displays to her company whenever she is elate with merit, and eager for praise; and amidst the praises which her friends and herself bestow up-

on her merit, she never fails to turn to me, and ask what all these would cost, if I had been to buy them.

Sometimes venture to tell her, that many of the ornaments are superfluous; that what is done with so much labour might have been supplied by a very easy purchase; that the work is not always worth the materials; and that I know not why the children should be persecuted with useless tasks, or obliged to make shoes that are never worn. She answers, with a look of contempt, that men never care how money goes, and proceeds to tell of a dozen new chairs for which she is contriving covers, and of a couch which she intends to stand as a monument of needle-work.

In the mean time the girls grow up in total ignorance of every thing past, present, and future. Molly asked me the other day, whether Ireland was in France, and was ordered by her mother to mend her hem. Kitty knows not, at sixteen, the difference between a Protestant and a Papist, because she has been employed three years in filling the side of a closet with a hanging that is to represent Cranmer in the flames. And Dolly, my eldest girl, is now unable to

read a chapter in the Bible, having spent all her time, which other children pass at school, in working the interview between Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

About a month ago, Tent and Turkey-stitch seemed at a stand; my wife knew not what new work to introduce: I ventured to propose that the girls should now learn to read and write, and mentioned the necessity of a little arithmetic; but, unhappily, my wife has discovered that linen wears out, and has bought the girls three little wheels, that they may spin huckaback for the servants table. I remonstrated, that with larger wheels they might dispatch in an hour what must now cost them a day; but she told me, with irresistible authority, that any business is better than idleness; that when these wheels are set upon a table, with mats under them, they will turn without noise, and keep the girls upright; that great wheels are not fit for gentlewomen; and that with these, small as they are, she does not doubt but that the three girls, if they are kept close, will spin every year as much cloth as would cost five pounds if one was to buy it.

Nº XIV. SATURDAY, JULY 15.

WHEN Diogenes received a visit in his tub from Alexander the Great, and was asked, according to the ancient forms of royal courtesy, what petition he had to offer—'I have nothing,' said he, 'to ask, but that you would remove to the other side, that you may not, by intercepting the sunshine, take from me what you cannot give me.'

Such was the demand of Diogenes from the greatest monarch of the earth; which those, who have less power than Alexander, may, with yet more propriety, apply to themselves. He that does much good, may be allowed to do sometimes a little harm. But if the opportunities of beneficence be denied by fortune, innocence should at least be vigilantly preserved.

It is well known, that time once past never returns; and that the moment which is lost, is lost for ever. Time therefore ought, above all other kinds of property, to be free from invasion; and

yet there is no man who does no claim the power of wasting that time which is the right of others.

This usurpation is so general, that a very small part of the year is spent by choice; scarcely any thing is done when it is intended, or obtained when it is desired. Life is continually ravaged by invaders; one steals away an hour, and another a day; one conceals the robbery by hurrying us into business, another by lulling us with amusement; the depredation is continued through a thousand vicissitudes of tumult and tranquillity, till, having lost all, we can lose no more.

This waste of the lives of men has been very frequently charged upon the great, whose followers linger from year to year in expectations, and die at last with petitions in their hands. Those who raise envy, will easily incur censure. I know not whether flattery and patronage do not suffer more reproaches than they deserve, and may not rather them-

selves complain that they are given up a prey to pretensions without merit, and to importunity without shame.

The truth is, that the inconveniences of attendance are more lamented than felt. To the greater number solicitation is its own reward. To be seen in good company, to talk of familiarities with men of power, to be able to tell the freshest news, to gratify an inferior circle with predictions of increase or decline of favour, and to be regarded as a candidate for high offices, are compensations more than equivalent to the delay of favours, which perhaps he that begs them has hardly confidence to expect.

A man conspicuous in a high station, who multiplies hopes that he may multiply dependants, may be considered as a beast of prey, justly dreaded, but easily avoided; his den is known, and they who would not be devoured, need not approach it. The great danger of the waste of time is from caterpillars and moths, who are not resisted, because they are not feared, and who work on with unheeded mischiefs, and invisible encroachments.

He whose rank or merit procures him the notice of mankind, must give up himself, in a great measure, to the convenience or humour of those who surround him. Every man, who is sick of himself, will fly to him for relief; he that wants to speak will require him to hear; and he that wants to hear will expect him to speak. Hour passes after hour, the noon succeeds to morning, and the even-

ing to noon, while a thousand objects are forced upon his attention, which he rejects as fast as they are offered, but which the custom of the world requires to be received with appearance of regard.

If we will have the kindness of others, we must endure their follies. He, who cannot persuade himself to withdraw from society, must be content to pay a tribute of his time to a multitude of tyrants; to the loiterer, who makes appointments which he never keeps; to the consulter, who asks advice which he never takes; to the boaster, who blusters only to be praised; to the complainer, who whines only to be pitied; to the projector, whose happiness is to entertain his friends with expectations which all but himself know to be vain; to the economist, who tells of bargains and settlements; to the politician, who predicts the fate of battles and breach of alliances; to the usurer, who compares the different funds; and to the talker, who talks only because he loves to be talking.

To put every man in possession of his own time, and rescue the day from this succession of usurpers, is beyond my power and beyond my hope. Yet, perhaps, some stop might be put to this unmerciful persecution, if all would seriously reflect, that whoever pays a visit that is not desired, or talks longer than the hearer is willing to attend, is guilty of an injury which he cannot repair, and takes away that which he cannot give.

Nº XV. SATURDAY, JULY 22.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Have the misfortune to be a man of business; that, you will say, is a most grievous one: but what makes it the more so to me, is, that my wife has nothing to do; at least she had too good an education, and the prospect of too good a fortune in reversion when I married her, to think of employing herself either in my shop affairs, or the management of my family.

Her time, you know, as well as my own, must be filled up some way or other. For my part, I have enough to mind, in weighing my goods out,

and waiting on my customers: but my wife, though she could be of as much use as a shopman to me, if she would put her hand to it, is now only in my way. She walks all the morning sauntering about the shop with her arms through her pocket-holes, or stands gaping at the door-sill, and looking at every person that passes by. She is continually asking me a thousand frivolous questions about every customer that comes in and goes out; and all the while that I am entering any thing in my day-book, she is lolling over the counter, and staring at it, as if I was only scribbling or drawing figures for her amusement. Sometimes

times, indeed, she will take a needle: but as she always works at the door, or in the middle of the shop, she has so many interruptions, that she is longer hemming a towel, or darning a stocking, than I am in breaking forty loaves of sugar, and making it up into pounds.

In the afternoon I am sure likewise to have her company, except she is called upon by some of her acquaintance: and then, as we let out all the upper part of our house, and have only a little room backwards for ourselves, they either keep such a chattering, or else are calling out every moment to me, that I cannot mind my business for them.

My wife, I am sure, might do all the little matters our family requires; and I could wish that she would employ herself in them; but, instead of that, we have a girl to do the work, and look after a little boy about two years old, which I may fairly say is the mother's own child. The brat must be humoured in every thing: he is therefore suffered constantly to play in the shop, pull all the goods about, and clamber up the shelves to get at the plumbs and sugar. I dare not correct him; because if I did, I should have wife and maid both upon me at once. As to the latter, she is as lazy and fluttish as her mistress; and because she complains she has too much work, we can scarce get her to do any thing at all; nay, what is worse than that, I am afraid she is hardly honest; and as she is entrusted to buy in all our provisions, the jade, I am sure, makes a market-penny out of every article.

But to return to my deary.—The evenings are the only time, when it is fine weather, that I am left to myself; for then she generally takes the child out to give it milk in the Park. When she

comes home again, she is so fatigued with walking, that she cannot stir from her chair: and it is an hour, after shop is shut, before I can get a bit of supper, while the maid is taken up in undressing and putting the child to bed.

But you will pity me much more, when I tell you the manner in which we generally pass our Sundays. In the morning she is commonly too ill to dress herself to go to church, she therefore never gets up till noon; and, what is still more vexatious, keeps me in bed with her, when I ought to be busily engaged in better employment. It is well if she can get her things on by dinner time; and when that is over, I am sure to be dragged out by her either to Georgia, or Hornsey Wood, or the White Conduit House. Yet even these near excursions are so very fatiguing to her, that, besides what it costs me in tea and hot rolls, and syllabubs, and cakes for the boy, I am frequently forced to take a hackney-coach, or drive them out in a one-horse chair. At other times, as my wife is rather of the fattest, and a very poor walker, besides bearing her whole weight upon my arm, I am obliged to carry the child myself.

Thus, Sir, does she constantly drawl out her time, without either profit or satisfaction; and, while I see my neighbours wives helping in the shop, and almost earning as much as their husbands, I have the mortification to find, that mine is nothing but a dead weight upon me. In short, I do not know any greater misfortune can happen to a plain hard-working tradesman, as I am, than to be joined to such a woman, who is rather a clog than an helpmate to him. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

ZACHARY TREACLE.

Nº XVI. SATURDAY, JULY 29.

I Paid a visit yesterday to my old friend Ned Drugget, at his country lodgings. Ned began trade with a very small fortune; he took a small house in an obscure street, and for some years dealt only in remnants. Knowing that *light gains make a heavy purse*, he was content with moderate profit; having observed or heard the effects of civility, he bowed down to the counter edge at the entrance and departure of every cus-

tomers, listened without impatience to the objections of the ignorant, and refused without resentment the offers of the penurious. His only recreation was to stand at his own door and look into the street. His dinner was sent him from a neighbouring alehouse, and he opened and shut the shop at a certain hour with his own hands.

His reputation soon extended from one end of the street to the other; and

D 2

Mr,

Mr. Drugger's exemplary conduct was recommended by every master to his apprentice, and by every father to his son. Ned was not only considered as a thriving trader, but as a man of elegance and politeness, for he was remarkably neat in his dress; and would wear his coat thread-bare without spotting it; his hat was always brushed, his shoes glossy, his wig nicely curled, and his stockings without a wrinkle. With such qualifications it was not very difficult for him to gain the heart of Miss Comfit, the only daughter of Mr. Comfit the confectioner.

Ned is one of those whose happiness marriage has increased. His wife had the same disposition with himself, and his method of life was very little changed, except that he dismissed the lodgers from the first floor, and took the whole house into his own hands.

He had already, by his parsimony, accumulated a considerable sum, to which the fortune of his wife was now added. From this time he began to grasp at greater acquisitions; and was always ready, with money in his hand, to pick up the refuse of a sale, or to buy the stock of a trader who retired from business. He soon added his parlour to his shop, and was obliged, a few months afterwards, to hire a warehouse.

He had now a shop splendidly and copiously furnished with every thing that time had injured, or fashion had degraded, with fragments of tissues, odd yards of brocade, vast bales of faded silk, and innumerable boxes of antiquated ribbands. His shop was soon celebrated through all quarters of the town, and frequented by every form of ostentatious poverty. Every maid, whose misfortune it was to be taller than her lady, matched her gown at Mr. Drugget's; and many a maiden who had passed a winter with her aunt in London, dazzled the rustics at her return, with cheap finery which Drugget had supplied. His shop was often visited in a morning by ladies who left their coaches in the next street, and crept through the alley in linen gowns. Drugget knows the rank of his customers by their bashfulness; and when he finds them unwilling to be seen, invites them up stairs, or retires with them to the back window.

I rejoiced at the increasing prosperity of my friend, and imagined that as he

grew rich, he was growing happy. His mind has partaken the enlargement of his fortune. When I stepped in for the first five years, I was welcomed only with a shake of the hand; in the next period of his life, he beckoned across the way for a pot of beer; but, for six years past, he invites me to dinner; and, if he bespeaks me the day before, never fails to regale me with a fillet of veal.

His riches neither made him uncivil nor negligent: he rose at the same hour, attended with the same assiduity, and bowed with the same gentleness. But for some years he has been much inclined to talk of the fatigues of business, and the confinement of a shop, and to wish that he had been so happy as to have renewed his uncle's lease of a farm, that he might have lived without noise and hurry, in a pure air, in the artless society of honest villagers, and the contemplation of the works of nature.

I soon discovered the cause of my friend's philosophy. He thought himself grown rich enough to have a lodging in the country, like the mercers on Ludgate Hill, and was resolved to enjoy himself in the decline of life. This was a revolution not to be made suddenly. He talked three years of the pleasures of the country, but passed every night over his own shop. But at last he resolved to be happy, and hired a lodging in the country, that he may lead some hours in the week from business; 'For,' says he, '*when a man advances in life, he loves to entertain himself sometimes with his own thoughts.*'

I was invited to this seat of quiet and contemplation among those whom Mr. Drugget considers as his most reputable friends, and desires to make the first witnesses of his elevation to the highest dignities of a shop-keeper. I found him at Islington, in a room which overlooked the high road, amusing himself with looking through the window, which the clouds of dust would not suffer him to open. He embraced me, told me I was welcome into the country, and asked me, if I did not feel myself refreshed. He then desired that dinner might be hastened, for fresh air always sharpened his appetite, and ordered me a toast and a glass of wine after my walk. He told me much of the pleasure he found in retirement, and wondered what had kept him so long out of the country. After dinner, company came in, and Mr. Drugget

Drugget again repeated the praises of the country, recommended the pleasures of meditation, and told them, that he

had been all the morning at the window, counting the carriages as they passed before him.

N^O XVII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 5.

THE rainy weather which has continued the last month, is said to have given great disturbance to the inspectors of barometers. The oraculous glass has deceived their votaries; shower has succeeded shower, though they predicted sunshine and dry skies; and by fatal confidence in these fallacious promises, many coats have lost their gloss, and many curls been moistened to flaccidity.

This is one of the distresses to which mortals subject themselves by the pride of speculation. I had no part in this learned disappointment, who am content to credit my senses, and to believe that rain will fall when the air blackens, and that the weather will be dry when the sun is bright. My caution indeed does not always preserve me from a shower. To be wet, may happen to the genuine Idler; but to be wet in opposition to theory, can befall only the Idler that pretends to be busy. Of those that spin out life in trifles, and die without a memorial, many flatter themselves with high opinions of their own importance, and imagine that they are every day adding some improvement to human life. To be idle and to be poor, have always been reproaches; and therefore every man endeavours, with his utmost care, to hide his poverty from others; and his *idleness* from himself.

Among those whom I never could persuade to rank themselves with Idlers, and who speak with indignation of my morning sleeps and nocturnal rambles; one passes the day in catching spiders, that he may count their eyes with a microscope; another erects his head, and exhibits the dust of a marigold separated from the flower with a dexterity worthy of Leeuwenhoeck himself. Some turn the wheel of electricity, some suspend rings to a loadstone, and find that what they did yesterday they can do again to-day. Some register the changes of the wind, and die fully convinced that the wind is changeable.

There are men yet more profound, who have heard that two colourless liquors may produce a colour by union;

and that two cold bodies will grow hot if they are mingled: they mingle them, and produce the effect expected, say it is strange, and mingle them again.

The Idlers that sport only with inanimate nature may claim some indulgence; if they are useless, they are still innocent: but there are others whom I know not how to mention without more emotion than my love of quiet willingly admits. Among the inferior professors of medical knowledge, is a race of wretches, whose lives are only varied by varieties of cruelty; whose favourite amusement is to nail dogs to tables, and open them alive; to try how long life may be continued in various degrees of mutilation, or with the excision or laceration of the vital parts; to examine whether burning irons are felt more acutely by the bone or tendon; and whether the more lasting agonies are produced by poison forced into the mouth or injected into the veins.

It is not without reluctance that I offend the sensibility of the tender mind with images like these. If such cruelties were not practised, it were to be desired that they should not be conceived; but since they are published every day with ostentation, let me be allowed once to mention them, since I mention them with abhorrence.

Mead has invidiously remarked of Woodward, that he gathered shells and stones, and would pass for a philosopher. With pretensions much less reasonable, the anatomical novice tears out the living bowels of an animal, and styles himself Physician, prepares himself by familiar cruelty for that profession which he is to exercise upon the tender and the helpless, upon feeble bodies and broken minds, and by which he has opportunities to extend his arts of torture, and continue those experiments upon insensibility and age which he has hitherto tried upon cats and dogs.

What is alledged in defence of these hateful practices, every one knows; but the truth is, that by knives, fire, and poison, knowledge is not always sought, and is very seldom attained. The experiments

iments that have been tried, are tried again; he that burned an animal with irons yesterday, will be willing to amuse himself with burning another to-morrow. I know not, that by living dissections any discovery has been made by which a single malady is more easily cured. And if the knowledge of physiology has been somewhat increased,

he surely buys knowledge dear, who learns the use of the lasteals at the expence of his humanity. It is time that universal resentment should arise against these horrid operations, which tend to harden the heart, extinguish those sensations which give man confidence in man, and make the physician more dreadful than the gout or stone.

N^o XVIII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 12.

TO THE IDLER.

IT commonly happens to him who endeavours to obtain distinction by ridicule or censure, that he teaches others to practise his own arts against himself; and that, after a short enjoyment of the applause paid to his sagacity, or of the mirth excited by his wit, he is doomed to suffer the same severities of scrutiny, to hear enquiry detecting his faults, and exaggeration sporting with his failings.

The natural discontent of inferiority will seldom fail to operate in some degree of malice against him, who professes to superintend the conduct of others, especially if he seats himself uncalled in the chair of judicature, and exercises authority by his own commission.

You cannot, therefore, wonder that your observations on human folly, if they produce laughter at one time, awaken criticism at another; and that among the numbers whom you have taught to scoff at the retirement of Druggot, there is one who offers his apology.

The mistake of your old friend is by no means peculiar. The public pleasures of far the greater part of mankind are counterfeited. Very few carry their philosophy to places of diversion, or are very careful to analyse their enjoyments. The general condition of life is so full of misery, that we are glad to catch delight without enquiring whence it comes, or by what power it is bestowed.

The mind is seldom quickened to very vigorous operations but by pain, or the dread of pain. We do not disturb ourselves with the detection of fallacies which do us no harm, nor willingly decline a pleasing effect to investigate it's cause. He that is happy, by whatever means, desires nothing but the continuance of happiness, and is no more so-

licitous to distribute his sensations into their proper species, than the common gazer on the beauties of the spring to separate light into it's original rays.

Pleasure is therefore seldom such as it appears to others, nor often such as we represent it to ourselves. Of the ladies that sparkle at a musical performance, a very small number has any quick sensibility of harmonious sounds. But every one that goes has her pleasure. She has the pleasure of wearing fine clothes, and of shewing them; of outshining those whom she suspects to envy her; she has the pleasure of appearing among other ladies in a place whither the race of meaner mortals seldom intrudes, and of reflecting that, in the conversations of the next morning, her name will be mentioned among those that sat in the first row; she has the pleasure of returning courtesies, or refusing to return them, of receiving compliments with civility, or rejecting them with disdain. She has the pleasure of meeting some of her acquaintance, of guessing why the rest are absent, and of telling them that she saw the opera, on pretence of enquiring why they would miss it. She has the pleasure of being supposed to be pleased with a refined amusement, and of hoping to be numbered among the votresses of harmony. She has the pleasure of escaping for two hours the superiority of a sister, or the controul of a husband; and from all these pleasures she concludes, that heavenly music is the balm of life.

All assemblies of gaiety are brought together by motives of the same kind. The theatre is not filled with those that know or regard the skill of the actor, nor the ball-room by those who dance, or attend to the dancers. To all places of general resort, where the standard of pleasure is erected, we run with equal eagerness, or appearance of eagerness, for

THE IDLER.

for very different reasons. One goes that he may say he has been there, another because he never misses. This man goes to try what he can find, and that to discover what others find. Whatever diversion is costly will be frequented by those who desire to be thought rich; and whatever has, by any accident, become fashionable, easily continues its reputation, because every one is ashamed of not partaking it.

To every place of entertainment we go with expectation, and desire of being pleased; we meet others who are brought by the same motives; no one will be the first to own the disappointment; one face reflects the smile of another, till each believes the rest delighted, and endeavours to catch and transmit the circulating rapture. In time all are deceived by the cheat to which all contribute.

The fiction of happiness is propagated by every tongue, and confirmed by every look, till at last all profess the joy which they do not feel, consent to yield to the general delusion; and when the voluntary dream is at an end, lament that bliss is of so short a duration.

If Drugget pretended to pleasures of which he had no perception, or boasted of one amusement where he was indulging another, what did he which is not done by all those who read his story? of whom some pretend delight in conversation, only because they dare not be alone; some praise the quiet of solitude, because they are envious of sense and impatient of folly; and some gratify their pride, by writing characters which expose the vanity of life. I am, Sir, your humble servant.

N^o XIX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 19.

SOME of those ancient sages that have exercised their abilities in the enquiry after the *supreme good*, have been of opinion, that the highest degree of earthly happiness is quiet; a calm repose both of mind and body, undisturbed by the sight of folly or the noise of business, the tumults of public commotion, or the agitations of private interest; a state in which the mind has no other employment, but to observe and regulate her own motions, to trace thought from thought, combine one image with another, raise systems of science, and form theories of virtue.

To the scheme of these solitary speculatists it has been justly objected, that if they are happy, they are happy only by being useless. That mankind is one vast republic, where every individual receives many benefits from the labour of others, which, by labouring in his turn for others, he is obliged to repay; and that where the united efforts of all are not able to exempt all from misery, none have a right to withdraw from their task of vigilance, or to be indulged in idle wisdom or solitary pleasures.

It is common for controvertists, in the heat of disputation, to add one position to another till they reach the extremities of knowledge, where truth and falsehood lose their distinction. Their

admirers follow them to the brink of absurdity, and then start back from each side towards the middle point. So it has happened in this great disquisition. Many perceive alike the force of the contrary arguments, find quiet shameful, and business dangerous, and therefore pass their lives between them, in bustle without business, and in negligence without quiet.

Among the principal names of this moderate set is that great philosopher Jack Whirler, whose business keeps him in perpetual motion, and whose motion always eludes his business; who is always to do what he never does, who cannot stand still because he is wanted in another place, and who is wanted in many places because he stays in none.

Jack has more business than he can conveniently transact in one house; he has therefore one habitation near Bow Church, and another about a mile distant. By this ingenious distribution of himself between two houses, Jack has contrived to be found at neither. Jack's trade is extensive, and he has many dealers; his conversation is sprightly, and he has many companions; his disposition is kind, and he has many friends. Jack neither forbears pleasure for business, nor omits business for pleasure, but is equally invisible to his friends and his customers;

THE IDLER.

to him that comes with an invitation to a club, and to him that waits to settle an account.

When you call at his house, his clerk tells you, that Mr. Whirler was just stepped out, but will be at home exactly at two; you wait at a coffee-house till two, and then find that he has been at home, and is gone out again; but left word that he should be at the Half Moon Tavern at seven, where he hopes to meet you. At seven you go to the tavern. At eight in comes Mr. Whirler to tell you, that he is glad to see you, and only begs leave to run for a few minutes to a gentleman that lives near the Exchange, from whom he will return before supper can be ready. Away he runs to the Exchange, to tell those who are waiting for him, that he must beg them to defer the business till tomorrow, because his time is come at the Half Moon.

Jack's cheerfulness and civility rank him amongst those whose presence never gives pain, and whom all receive with fondness and caresses. He calls often on his friends, to tell them, that he will come again to-morrow; on the morrow he comes again to tell them how an unexpected summons hurries him away. When he enters a house, his first declaration is, that he cannot sit down; and so short are his visits, that he seldom appears to have come for any other reason but to say, He must go.

The dogs of Egypt, when thirst brings them to the Nile, are said to run as they drink for fear of the crocodiles. Jack Whirler always dines at full speed. He enters, finds the family at table, sits familiarly down, and fills his plate; but while the first morsel is in his mouth,

hears the clock strike, and rises; then goes to another house, sits down again, recollects another engagement; has only time to taste the soup, makes a short excuse to the company, and continues through another street his desultory dinner.

But overwhelmed as he is with business, his chief desire is to have still more. Every new proposal takes possession of his thoughts; he soon balances probabilities, engages in the project, brings it almost to completion, and then forsakes it for another, which he catches with some alacrity, urges with the same vehemence, and abandons with the same coldness.

Every man may be observed to have a certain strain of lamentation, some peculiar theme of complaint on which he dwells in his moments of dejection. Jack's topic of sorrow is the want of time. Many an excellent design languishes in empty theory for want of time. For the omission of any civilities, want of time is his plea to others; for the neglect of any affairs, want of time is his excuse to himself. That he wants time, he sincerely believes; for he once pined away many months with a lingering distemper, for want of time to attend his health.

Thus Jack Whirler lives in perpetual fatigue without proportionate advantage, because he does not consider that no man can see all with his own eyes, or do all with his own hands; that whoever is engaged in multiplicity of business, must transact much by substitution, and leave something to hazard; and that he who attempts to do all, will waste his life in doing little.

N^o XX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 26.

TH^{ERE} is no crime more infamous than the violation of truth. It is apparent that men can be social beings no longer than they believe each other. When speech is employed only as the vehicle of falsehood, every man must disunite himself from others, inhabit his own cave, and seek prey only for himself.

Yet the law of truth, thus sacred and necessary, is broken without punishment, without censure, in compliance with inveterate prejudice and prevailing

passions. Men are willing to credit what they wish, and encourage rather those who gratify them with pleasure, than those that instruct them with fidelity.

For this reason every historian discovers his country, and it is impossible to read the different accounts of any great event, without a wish that truth had more power over partiality.

Amidst the joy of my countrymen for the acquisition of Louisbourg, I could not forbear to consider how differently this

this revolution of American power is not only now mentioned by the contending nations, but will be represented by the writers of another century.

The English historian will imagine himself barely doing justice to English virtue, when he relates the capture of Louisbourg in the following manner.

'The English had hitherto seen, with great indignation, their attempts baffled, and their force defied, by an enemy, whom they considered themselves as intitled to conquer by the right of prescription, and whom many ages of hereditary superiority had taught them to despise. Their fleets were more numerous, and their seamen braver than those of France, yet they only floated useless on the ocean, and the French derided them from their ports. Misfortunes, as is usual, produced discontent, the people murmured at the ministers, and the ministers censured the commanders.

'In the summer of this year, the English began to find their success answerable to their cause. A fleet and an army were sent to America, to dislodge the enemies from the settlements which they had so perfidiously made, and so insolently maintained, and to repress that power which was growing more every day by the association of the Indians, with whom these degenerate Europeans intermarried, and whom they secured to their party by presents and promises.

'In the beginning of June the ships of war and vessels containing the land forces appeared before Louisbourg, a place so secure by nature, that art was almost superfluous, and yet fortified by art as if nature had left it open. The French boasted that it was impregnable, and spoke with scorn of all attempts that could be made against it. The garrison was numerous, the stores equal to the longest siege, and their engineers and commanders high in reputation. The mouth of the harbour was so narrow, that three ships within might easily defend it against all attacks from the sea. The French had, with that caution which cowards borrow from fear and attribute to policy, eluded our fleets, and sent into that port five great ships and six smaller, of which they sunk four in the mouth of the passage, having raised batteries, and posted troops, at all the places where they thought it possible to make a descent. The English, however, had

more to dread from the roughness of the sea, than from the skill or bravery of the defendants. Some days passed before the surges, which rise very high round that island, would suffer them to land. At last their impatience could be restrained no longer; they got possession of the shore with little loss by the sea, and with less by the enemy. In a few days the artillery was landed, the batteries were raised, and the French had no other hope than to escape from one post to another. A shot from the batteries fired the powder in one of their largest ships, the flame spread to the two next, and all three were destroyed; the English admiral sent his boats against the two large ships yet remaining, took them without resistance, and terrified the garrison to an immediate capitulation.

Let us now oppose to this English narrative the relation which will be produced, about the same time, by the writer of the age of Louis XV.

'About this time the English admitted to the conduct of affairs, a man who undertook to save from destruction that ferocious and turbulent people, who, from the mean insolence of wealthy traders, and the lawless confidence of successful robbers, were now sunk in despair and stupified with horror. He called in the ships which had been dispersed ever the ocean to guard their merchants, and sent a fleet and an army, in which almost the whole strength of England was comprised, to secure their possessions in America, which were endangered alike by the French arms and the French virtue. We had taken the English fortresses by force, and gained the Indian nations by humanity. The English, wherever they come, are sure to have the natives for their enemies; for the only motive of their settlements is avarice, and the only consequence of their success is oppression. In this war they acted like other barbarians; and, with a degree of outrageous cruelty, which the gentleness of our manners scarce suffers us to conceive, offered rewards by open proclamation to those who should bring in the scalps of Indian women and children. A trader always makes war with the cruelty of a pirate.

'They had long looked with envy and with terror upon the influence which the French exerted over all the Northern regions of America by the possession of Louisbourg, a place naturally strong.

and new fortified with some slight out-works. They hoped to surprise the garrison unprovided; but that sluggishness which always defeats their malice, gave us time to send supplies, and to station ships for the defence of the harbour. They came before Louisbourg in June, and were for some time in doubt whether they should land. But the commanders, who had lately seen an admiral beheaded for not having done what he had not power to do, durst not leave the place unassaulted. An Englishman has no ardour for honour, nor zeal for duty; he neither values glory, nor loves his king; but balances one danger with

another, and will fight rather than be hanged. They therefore landed, but with great loss: their engineers had, in the last war with the French, learned something of the military sciences, and made their approaches with sufficient skill; but all their efforts had been without effect, had not a ball unfortunately fallen into the powder of one of our ships, which communicated the fire to the rest, and, by opening the passage of the harbour, obliged the garrison to capitulate. Thus was Louisbourg lost, and our troops marched out with the admiration of their enemies who durst hardly think themselves masters of the place.

Nº XXI. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2.

TO THE IDLER.

DEAR MR. IDLER,

THERE is a species of misery or of disease, for which our language is commonly supposed to be without a name, but which I think is emphatically enough denominated *listlessness*, and which is commonly termed a want of something to do.

Of the unhappiness of this state I do not expect all your readers to have an adequate idea. Many are overburthened with business, and can imagine no comfort but in rest; many have minds so placid, as willingly to indulge a voluntary lethargy; or so narrow, as easily to be filled to their utmost capacity. By these I shall not be understood, and therefore cannot be pitied. Those only will sympathise with my complaint, whose imagination is active and resolution weak, whose desires are ardent, and whose choice is delicate; who cannot satisfy themselves with standing still, and yet cannot find a motive to direct their course.

I was the second son of a gentleman, whose estate was barely sufficient to support himself and his heir in the dignity of killing game. He therefore made use of the interest which the alliances of his family afforded him, to procure me a post in the army. I passed some years in the most contemptible of all human stations, that of a soldier in time of peace. I wandered with the regiment as the quarters were changed, without opportunity for business, taste for knowledge, or money for pleasure. Where-

ever I came, I was for sometime a stranger without curiosity, and afterwards an acquaintance without friendship. Having nothing to hope in these places of fortuitous residence, I resigned my conduct to chance; I had no intention to offend, I had no ambition to delight.

I suppose every man is shocked when he hears how frequently soldiers are wishing for war. The wish is not always sincere; the greater part are content with sleep and lace, and counterfeit an ardour which they do not feel; but those who desire it most, are neither prompted by malevolence nor patriotism; they neither pant for laurels, nor delight in blood; but long to be delivered from the tyranny of idleness, and restored to the dignity of active beings.

I never imagined myself to have more courage than other men, yet was often involuntarily wishing for a war, but of a war at that time I had no prospect; and being enabled, by the death of an uncle, to live without my pay, I quitted the army, and resolved to regulate my own motions.

I was pleased for a while with the novelty of independence, and imagined that I had now found what every man desires. My time was in my own power, and my habitation was wherever my choice should fix it. I amused myself for two years, in passing from place to place, and comparing one convenience with another; but being at last ashamed of enquiry, and weary of uncertainty, I purchased a house, and established my family.

I now

I now expected to begin to be happy, and was happy for a short time with that expectation. But I soon perceived my spirits to subside, and my imagination to grow dark. The gloom thickened every day round me. I wondered by what malignant power my peace was blasted, till I discovered at last that I had nothing to do.

Time, with all its celerity, moves slowly to him, whose whole employment is to watch its flight. I am forced upon a thousand shifts to enable me to endure the tediousness of the day. I rise when I can sleep no longer, and take my morning walk; I see what I have seen before, and return. I sit down, and persuade myself that I sit down to think, find it impossible to think without a subject, rise up to enquire after news, and endeavour to kindle in myself an artificial impatience for intelligence of events, which will never extend any consequence to me, but that a few minutes they abstract me from myself.

When I have heard any thing that may gratify curiosity, I am busied, for a while, in running to relate it. I hasten from one place of discourse to another, delighted with my own importance, and proud to think that I am doing something, though I know that another hour would spare my labour.

I had once a round of visits, which I

paid very regularly, but I have now tired most of my friends. When I have sat down I forget to rise, and have more than once over-heard one asking another when I would be gone. I perceive the company tired, I observe the mistress of the family whispering to her servants, I find others given to put off business till to-morrow, I see the watches frequently inspected, and yet cannot withdraw to the vacuity of solitude, or venture myself in my own company.

Thus burthensome to myself and others, I form many schemes of employment which may make my life useful or agreeable, and exempt me from the ignominy of living by sufferance. This new course I have long designed, but have not yet begun. The present moment is never proper for the change, but there is always a time in view when all obstacles will be removed, and I shall surprize all that know me with a new distribution of my time. Twenty years have passed since I have resolved a complete amendment, and twenty years have been lost in delays. Age is coming upon me; and I should look back with rage and despair upon the waste of life, but that I am now beginning in earnest to begin a reformation. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

DICK LINGER,

Nº XXII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16.

TO THE IDLER.

512,
AS I was passing lately under one of the gates of this city, I was struck with horror by a rueful cry, which summoned me to remember the poor debtors.

The wisdom and justice of the English laws are, by Englishmen at least, loudly celebrated; but scarcely the most zealous admirers of our institutions can think that law wise, which, when men are capable of work, obliges them to beg; or just, which exposes the liberty of one to the passions of another.

The prosperity of a people is proportionate to the number of hands and minds usefully employed. To the community, sedition is a fever, corruption is a gangrene, and idleness an atrophy.

Whatever body, and whatever society, wastes more than it acquires, must gradually decay; and every being that continues to be fed, and ceases to labour, takes away something from the publick stock.

The confinement, therefore, of any man in the sloth and darkness of a prison, is a loss to the nation, and no gain to the creditor. For of the multitudes who are pining in those cells of misery, a very small part is suspected of any fraudulent act by which they retain what belongs to others. The rest are imprisoned by the wantonness of pride, the malignity of revenge, or the acrimony of disappointed expectation.

If those, who thus rigorously exercise the power which the law has put into their hands, be asked, why they con-

tinue to imprison those whom they know to be unable to pay them; one will answer, that his debtor once lived better than himself; another, that his wife looked above her neighbours, and his children went in silk cloaths to the dancing-school; and another, that he pretended to be a joker and a wit. Some will reply, that if they were in debt, they should meet with the same treatment; some, that they owe no more than they can pay, and need therefore give no account of their actions. Some will confess their resolution, that their debtors shall rot in jail; and some will discover, that they hope, by cruelty, to wring the payment from their friends.

The end of all civil regulations is to secure private happiness from private malignity; to keep individuals from the power of one another; but this end is apparently neglected, when a man, irritated with loss, is allowed to be the judge of his own cause, and to assign the punishment of his own pain; when the distinction between guilt and happiness, between casualty and design, is entrusted to eyes blind with interest, to understandings depraved by resentment.

Since poverty is punished among us as a crime, it ought at least to be treated with the same lenity as other crimes; the offender ought not to languish at the will of him whom he has offended, but to be allowed some appeal to the justice of his country. There can be no reason why any debtor should be imprisoned, but that he may be compelled to payment; and a term should therefore be fixed, in which the creditor should exhibit his accusation of concealed property. If such property can be discovered, let it be given to the creditor; if the charge is not offered, or cannot be proved, let the prisoner be dismissed.

Those who made the laws, have apparently supposed, that every deficiency of payment is the crime of the debtor. But the truth is, that the creditor always shares the act, and often more than shares the guilt of improper trust. It seldom happens that any man imprisons another but for debts which he suffered to be

contracted in hope of advantage to himself, and for bargains in which he proportioned his profit to his own opinion of the hazard; and there is no reason, why one should punish the other for a contract in which both concurred.

Many of the inhabitants of prisons may justly complain of harder treatment. He that once owes more than he can pay, is often obliged to bribe his creditor to patience, by encreasing his debt. Worse and worse commodities, at a higher and higher price, are forced upon him; he is impoverished by compulsive traffick, and at last overwhelmed, in the common receptacles of misery, by debts, which, without his own consent were accumulated on his head. To the relief of this distress, no other objection can be made, but that by an easy dissolution of debts, fraud will be left without punishment, and imprudence without awe; and that when insolvency shall be no longer punishable, credit will cease.

The motive to credit, is the hope of advantage. Commerce can never be at a stop, while one man wants what another can supply; and credit will never be denied, while it is likely to be repaid with profit. He that trusts one whom he designs to sue, is criminal by the act of trust; the cessation of such insidious traffick is to be desired, and no reason can be given why a change of the law should impair any other.

We see nation trade with nation, where no payment can be compelled. Mutual convenience produces mutual confidence; and the merchants continue to satisfy the demands of each other, though they have nothing to dread but the loss of trade.

It is vain to continue an institution, which experience shews to be ineffectual. We have now imprisoned one generation of debtors after another, but we do not find that their numbers lessen. We have now learned, that rashness and imprudence will not be deterred from taking credit; let us try whether fraud and avarice may be more easily restrained from giving it. I am, Sir, &c.

N^o XXIII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23.

LIFE has no pleasure higher or nobler than that of Friendship. It is painful to consider, that this sublime enjoyment may be impaired or destroyed by innumerable causes, and that there is no human possession of which the duration is less certain.

Many have talked, in very exalted language of the perpetuity of friendship, of invincible constancy, and unalienable kindness; and some examples have been seen of men who have continued faithful to their earliest choice, and whose affection has predominated over changes of fortune, and contrariety of opinion.

But these instances are memorable, because they are rare. The friendship which is to be practised or expected by common mortals, must take it's rise from mutual pleasure, and must end when the power ceases of delighting other.

Many accidents therefore may happen, by which the ardour of kindness will be abated, without criminal baseness or contemptible inconstancy on either part. To give pleasure is not always in our power; and little does he know himself, who believes that he can be always able to receive it.

Those who would gladly pass their days together may be separated by the different course of their affairs; and friendship, like love, is destroyed by long absence, though it may be encreased by short intermissions. What we have missed long enough to want it, we value more when it is regained; but that which has been lost till it is forgotten, will be found at last with little gladness, and with still less if a substitute has supplied the place. A man deprived of the companion to whom he used to open his bosom, and with whom he shared the hours of leisure and merriment, feels the day at first hanging heavy on him; his difficulties oppress, and his doubts distract him; he sees time come and go without his wonted gratification, and all is sadness within and solitude about him. But this uneasiness never lasts long; necessity produces expedients, new amusements are discovered, and new conversation is admitted.

No expectation is more frequently disappointed, than that which naturally arises in the mind from the prospect of meeting an old friend after long separation. We expect the attraction to be revived, and the coalition to be renewed; no man considers how much alteration time has made in himself, and very few enquire what effect it has had upon others. The first hour convinces them, that the pleasure which they have formerly enjoyed is for ever at an end; different scenes have made different impressions; the opinions of both are changed; and that similitude of manners and sentiment is lost, which confirmed them both in the approbation of themselves.

Friendship is often destroyed by opposition of interest, not only by the ponderous and visible interest which the desire of wealth and greatness forms and maintains, but by a thousand secret and slight competitions, scarcely known to the mind upon which they operate. There is scarcely any man without some favourite trifle which he values above greater attainments, some desire of petty praise which he cannot patiently suffer to be frustrated. This minute ambition is sometimes crossed before it is known, and sometimes defeated by wanton petulance: but such attacks are seldom made without the loss of friendship; for whoever has once found the vulnerable part will always be feared, and the resentment will burn on in secret of which shame hinders the discovery.

This, however, is a slow malignity, which a wise man will obviate as inconsistent with quiet, and a good man will repress as contrary to virtue; but human happiness is sometimes violated by some more sudden strokes.

A dispute begun in jest, upon a subject which a moment before was on both parts regarded with careless indifference, is continued by the desire of conquest, till vanity kindles into rage, and opposition rankles into enmity. Against this hasty mischief, I know not what security can be obtained: men will be sometimes surprized into quarrels; and though they might both hasten to reconciliation, as soon as their tumult had subsided,

subsid'd, yet two minds will seldom be found together, which can at once subdue their discontent, or immediately enjoy the sweets of peace, without remembering the wounds of the conflict.

Friendship has other enemies. Suspicion is always hardening the cautious, and disgust repelling the delicate. Very slender differences will sometimes part those whom long reciprocation of civility or beneficence has united. Lone love and Ranger retired into the country to enjoy the company of each other, and returned in six weeks cold and petulant. Ranger's pleasure was to walk in the fields, and Lone love's to sit in a bower; each had

complied with the other in his turn, and each was angry that compliance had been exacted.

The most fatal disease of friendship is gradual decay, or dislike hourly encreased by causes too slender for complaint, and too numerous for removal. Those who are angry may be reconciled; those who have been injured may receive a recompence; but when the desire of pleasing and willingness to be pleased is silently diminished, the renovation of friendship is hopeless; as, when the vital powers sink into languor, there is no longer any use of the physician.

N^o. XXIV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30.

WHEN man sees one of the inferior creatures perched upon a tree, or basking in the sunshine, without any apparent endeavour or pursuit, he often asks himself, or his companion—'On what that animal can be supposed to be thinking?'

Of this question, since neither bird nor beast can answer it, we must be content to live without the resolution. We know not how much the brutes recollect of the past, or anticipate of the future; what power they have of comparing and preferring; or whether their faculties may not rest in motionless indifference, till they are moved by the presence of their proper object, or stimulated to act by corporal sensations.

I am the less inclined to these superfluous enquiries, because I have always been able to find sufficient matter for curiosity in my own species. It is useless to go far in quest of that which may be found at home; a very narrow circle of observation will supply a sufficient number of men and women, who might be asked with equal propriety—'On what they can be thinking?'

It is reasonable to believe, that thought, like every thing else, has it's causes and effects; that it must proceed from something known, done, or suffered; and must produce some action or event. Yet how great is the number of those in whose minds no source of thought has ever been opened, in whose life no consequence of thought is ever discovered; who have learned nothing upon which they can reflect; who have

neither seen nor felt any thing which could leave it's traces on the memory; who neither foresee nor desire any change of their condition, and have therefore neither fear, hope, nor design, and yet are supposed to be thinking beings.

To every act a subject is required. He that thinks, must think upon something. But tell me, ye that pierce deepest into nature, ye that take the widest surveys of life, inform me, kind shades of Malbranche, and of Locke, what that something can be, which excites and continues thought in maiden aunts with small fortunes; in younger brothers that live upon annuities; in traders retired from business; in soldiers absent from their regiments; or in widows that have no children?

Life is commonly considered as either active or contemplative; but surely this division, how long soever it has been received, is inadequate and fallacious. There are mortals whose life is certainly not active, for they do neither good nor evil; and whose life cannot be properly called contemplative, for they never attend either to the conduct of men, or the works of Nature, but rise in the morning, look round them till night in careless stupidity, go to bed and sleep, and rise again in the morning.

It has been lately a celebrated question in the schools of philosophy, *Whether the soul always thinks?* Some have defined the soul to be the *power of thinking*; concluded that it's essence consists in act; that if it should cease to act, it would cease to be; and that cessation of thought

thought is but another name for extinction of mind. This argument is subtle, but not conclusive; because it supposes, what cannot be proved, that the nature of mind is properly defined. Others affect to disdain subtilty, when subtilty, will not serve their purpose, and appeal to daily experience. We spend many hours, they say, in sleep, without the least remembrance of any thoughts which then passed in our minds: and since we can only by our own consciousness be sure that we think, why should we imagine that we have had thought of which no consciousness remains?

This argument, which appeals to experience, may from experience be confuted. We every day do something which we forget when it is done, and know to have been done only by consequence. The waking hours are not denied to have been passed in thought; yet he that shall endeavour to recollect on one day the ideas of the former, will only turn the eye of reflection upon vacancy; he will find that the greater part is irrevocably vanished, and wonder how the moments could come and go, and leave so little behind them.

To discover only that the arguments on both sides are defective, and to throw back the tenet into its former uncer-

tainty, is the sport of wanton or malevolent scepticism, delighting to see the sons of Philosophy at work upon a task which never can be finished; at variance on a question that can never be decided. I shall suggest an argument hitherto overlooked, which may perhaps determine the controversy.

If it be impossible to think without materials, there must necessarily be minds that do not always think; and whence shall we furnish materials for the meditation of the glutton between his meals, of the sportsman in a rainy month, of the annuitant between the days of quarterly payment, of the politician when the mails are detained by contrary winds?

But how frequent soever may be the examples of existence without thought, it is certainly a state not much to be desired. He that lives in tropic insensibility, wants nothing of a carcase but putrefaction. It is the part of every inhabitant of the earth to partake the pains and pleasures of his fellow beings; and, as in a road through a country desert and uniform, the traveller languishes for want of amusement, so the passage of life will be tedious and irksome to him who does not beguile it by diversified ideas.

Nº XXV. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7.

TO THE IDLER.

I AM a very constant frequenter of the playhouse, a place to which I suppose the Idler not much a stranger, since he can have no where else so much entertainment with so little concurrence of his own endeavour. At all other assemblies, he that comes to receive delight, will be expected to give it; but in the theatre, nothing is necessary to the amusement of two hours, but to sit down and be willing to be pleased.

The last week has offered two new actors to the town. The appearance and retirement of actors are the great events of the theatrical world; and their first performances fill the pit with conjecture and prognostication, as the first actions of a new monarch agitate nations with hope or fear.

What opinion I have formed of the future excellence of these candidates for

dramatic glory, it is not necessary to declare. Their entrance gave me a higher and nobler pleasure than any borrowed character can afford. I saw the ranks of the theatre emulating each other in candour and humanity, and contending who should most effectually assist the struggles of endeavour, dissipate the blush of diffidence, and still the flutter of timidity.

This behaviour is such as becomes a people, too tender to repress those who wish to please, too generous to insult those who can make no resistance. A public performer is so much in the power of spectators, that all unnecessary severity is restrained by that general law of humanity, which forbids us to be cruel where there is nothing to be feared.

In every new performer something must be pardoned. No man can, by any force of resolution, secure to himself the full possession of his own powers under the

the eye of a large assembly. Variation of gesture, and flexion of voice, are to be obtained only by experience.

There is nothing for which such numbers think themselves qualified as for theatrical exhibition. Every human being has an action graceful to his own eye, a voice musical to his own ear, and a sensibility which Nature forbids him to know that any other bosom can excel. An art in which such numbers fancy themselves excellent, and which the public liberally rewards, will excite many competitors, and in many attempts there must be many miscarriages.

The care of the critic should be to distinguish error from inability, faults of inexperience from defects of nature. Action irregular and turbulent may be reclaimed; vociferation vehement and confused may be restrained and modulated; the stalk of the tyrant may become the gait of a man; the yell of inarticulate distress may be reduced to human lamentation. All these faults should be for a time overlooked, and afterwards censured with gentleness and candour. But if in an actor there appears an utter vacancy of meaning, a frigid equality, a stupid languor, a torpid apathy, the greatest kindness that can be shewn him, is a speedy sentence of expulsion.

I am, Sir, &c.

The plea which my correspondent has offered for young actors, I am very far from wishing to invalidate. I always considered those combinations which are sometimes formed in the playhouse, as acts of fraud or of cruelty: he that applauds him who does not deserve praise, is endeavouring to deceive the public;

he that hides in malice or sport, is an oppressor and a robber.

But surely this laudable forbearance might be justly extended to young poets. The art of the writer, like that of the player, is attained by slow degrees. The power of distinguishing and discriminating comic characters, or of filling tragedy with poetical images, must be the gift of Nature, which no instruction nor labour can supply; but the art of dramatic disposition, the contexture of the scenes, the opposition of characters, the involution of the plot, the expedients of suspension, and the stratagems of surprize, are to be learned by practice; and it is cruel to discourage a poet for ever, because he has not from genius what only experience can bestow.

Life is a stage. Let me likewise solicit candour for the young actor on the stage of life. They that enter into the world are too often treated with unreasonable rigour by those that were once as ignorant and heady as themselves; and distinction is not always made between the faults which require speedy and violent eradication, and those that will gradually drop away in the progression of life. Vicious solicitations of appetite, if not checked, will grow more importunate; and mean arts of profit or ambition will gather strength in the mind, if they are not early suppressed. But mistaken notions of superiority, desires of useless shew, pride of little accomplishments, and all the train of vanity, will be brushed away by the wing of time.

Reproof should not exhaust its power upon petty failings; let it watch diligently against the incursion of vice, and leave foppery and futility to die of themselves.

N^o XXVI. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14.

MR. IDLER,

I Never thought that I should write any thing to be printed; but having lately seen your first Essay, which was sent down into the kitchen, with a great bundle of gazettes and useless papers, I find that you are willing to admit any correspondent, and therefore hope you will not reject me. If you publish my letter, it may encourage others, in the same condition with myself to tell their

stories, which may be perhaps as useful as those of great ladies.

I am a poor girl. I was bred in the country at a charity-school, maintained by the contributions of wealthy neighbours. The ladies, or patronesses, visited us from time to time, examined how we were taught, and saw that our cloaths were clean. We lived happily enough; and were instructed to be thankful to those at whose cost we were educated.

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I was always the favourite of my mistress; she used to call me to read and shew my copy-book to all strangers, who never dismissed me without commendation, and very seldom without a shilling.

At last the chief of our subscribers, having passed a winter in London, came down full of an opinion new and strange to the whole country. She held it little less than criminal to teach poor girls to read and write. 'They who are born to poverty,' she said, 'are born to ignorance, and will work the harder the less they know.' She told her friends, that London was in confusion by the insolence of servants; that scarcely a wench was to be got for all work, since education had made such numbers of fine ladies, that nobody would now accept a lower title than that of a waiting maid, or something that might qualify her to wear laced shoes and long ruffles, and to sit at work in the parlour-window. But she was resolved, for her part, to spoil no more girls; those who were to live by their hands, should neither read nor write out of her pocket; the world was bad enough already, and she would have no part in making it worse.

She was for a short time warmly opposed, but she persevered in her notions, and withdrew her subscription. Few listen without a desire of conviction to those who advise them to spare their money. Her example and her arguments gained ground daily, and in less than a year the whole parish was convinced, that the nation would be ruined, if the children of the poor were taught to read and write.

Our school was now dissolved; my mistress kissed me when we parted, and told me, that, being old and helpless, she could not assist me, advised me to seek a service, and charged me not to forget what I had learned.

My reputation for scholarship, which had hitherto recommended me to favour, was, by the adherents to the new opinion, considered as a crime; and, when I offered myself to any mistress, I had no other answer than—'Sure, child, you would not work; hard work is not fit for a pen-woman; a scrubbing-brush would spoil your hand, child!'

I could not live at home; and while I was considering to what I should betake me, one of the girls, who had gone from our school to London, came down

in a silk gown, and told her acquaintance how well she lived, what fine things she saw, and what great wages she received. I resolved to try my fortune, and took my passage in the next week's waggon to London. I had no fares laid for me at my arrival, but came safe to a sister of my mistress, who undertook to get me a place. She knew only the families of mean tradesmen; and I, having no high opinion of my own qualifications, was willing to accept the first offer.

My first mistress was wife of a working watchmaker, who earned more than was sufficient to keep his family in decency and plenty; but it was their constant practice to hire a chaise on Sunday, and spend half the wages of the week on Richmond Hill; on Monday he commonly lay half in bed, and spent the other half in merriment; Tuesday and Wednesday consumed the rest of his money; and three days every week were passed in extremity of want by us who were left at home, while my master lived on trust at an alehouse. You may be sure, that of the sufferers the maid suffered most; and I left them, after three months, rather than be starved.

I was then said to a hatter's wife. There was no want to be dreaded, for they lived in perpetual luxury. My mistress was a diligent woman, and rose early in the morning to set the journey-men to work; my master was a man much beloved by his neighbours, and sat at one club or other every night. I was obliged to wait on my master at night, and on my mistress in the morning. He seldom came home before two, and she rose at five. I could no more live without sleep than without food, and therefore entreated them to look out for another servant.

My next removal was to a linen-draper's, who had six children. My mistress, when I first entered the house, informed me, that I must never contradict the children, nor suffer them to cry. I had no desire to offend, and readily promised to do my best. But when I gave them their breakfast, I could not help all first; when I was playing with one in my lap, I was forced to keep the rest in expectation. That which was not gratified always repeated the injury with a loud outcry, which put my mistress in a fury at me, and procured sugar-plums to the child. I could not keep six chil-

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dren quiet, who were bribed to be clamorous; and was therefore dismissed, as a girl honest, but not good-natured.

I then lived with a couple that kept a petty shop of remnants and cheaplinen. I was qualified to make a bill, or keep a book; and being therefore often called, at a busy time, to serve the customers, expected that I should now be happy, in proportion as I was useful. But my mistress appropriated every day part of the profit to some private use, and, as she grew bolder in her theft, at last deducted such sums, that my master began to wonder how he sold so much, and gain-

ed so little. She pretended to assist his enquiries, and began very gravely, to hope that *Betty was honest, and yet these sharp girls were apt to be light-fingered.* You will believe that I did not stay there much longer.

The rest of my story I will tell you in another letter; and only beg to be informed, in some paper, for which of my places, except perhaps the last, I was disqualified, by my skill in reading and writing. I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

BETTY BROOM,

Nº XXVII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12.

IT has been the endeavour of all those whom the world has revered for superior wisdom, to persuade man to be acquainted with himself, to learn his own powers and his own weakness, to observe by what evils he is most dangerously beset, and by what temptations most easily overcome.

This counsel has been often given with serious dignity, and often received with appearance of conviction; but, as very few can search deep into their own minds without meeting what they wish to hide from themselves, scarce any man persists in cultivating such disagreeable acquaintance, but draws the veil again between his eyes and his heart, leaves his passions and appetites as he found them, and advises others to look into themselves.

This is the common result of enquiry even among those that endeavour to grow wiser or better, but this endeavour is far enough from frequency; the greater part of the multitudes that swarm upon the earth have never been disturbed by such uneasy curiosity, but deliver themselves up to business or to pleasure, plunge into the current of life, whether placid or turbulent, and pass on from one point of prospect to another, attentive rather to any thing than the state of their minds; satisfied, at an easy rate, with an opinion, that they are no worse than others, that every man must mind his own interest, or that their pleasures only hurt themselves, and are therefore no proper subjects of censure.

Some, however, there are, whom the intrusion of scruples, the recollection of

better notions, or the latent reprehension of good examples, will not suffer to live entirely contented with their own conduct; these are forced to pacify the mutiny of reason with fair promises, and quiet their thoughts with designs of calling all their actions to review, and planning a new scheme for the time to come.

There is nothing which we estimate so fallaciously as the force of our own resolutions, nor any fallacy which we so unwillingly and tardily detect. He that has resolved a thousand times, and a thousand times deserted his own purpose, yet suffers no abatement of his confidence, but still believes himself his own master; and able, by innate vigour of soul, to press forward to his end, through all the obstructions that inconveniences or delights can put in his way.

That this mistake should prevail for a time, is very natural. When conviction is present, and temptation out of sight, we do not easily conceive how any reasonable being can deviate from his true interest. What ought to be done while it yet only hangs in speculation, is so plain and certain, that there is no place for doubt; the whole soul yields itself to the predominance of truth, and readily determines to do what, when the time of action comes, will be at last omitted.

I believe most men may review all the lives that have passed within their observation, without remembering one efficacious resolution, or being able to tell a single instance of a course of practice suddenly changed in consequence of a change of opinion; or an establishment of

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of determination. Many indeed alter their conduct; and are not at fifty what they were at thirty, but they commonly varied imperceptibly from themselves, followed the train of external causes, and rather suffered reformation than made it.

It is not uncommon to charge the difference between promise and performance, between profession and reality, upon deep design and studied deceit; but the truth is, that there is very little hypocrisy in the world; we do not so often endeavour or wish to impose on others as on ourselves; we resolve to do right, we hope to keep our resolutions, we declare them to confirm our own hope, and fix our own inconstancy by calling witnesses of our actions; but at last habit prevails, and those whom we invited to our triumph, laugh at our defeat.

Custom is commonly too strong for the most resolute resolver, though furnished for the assault with all the weapons of philosophy. 'He that endeavours to free himself from an ill habit,' says

Bacon, 'must not change too much at a time, lest he should be discouraged by difficulty; nor too little, for then he will make but slow advances.' This is a precept which may be applauded in a book, but will fail in the trial, in which every change will be found too great or too little. Those who have been able to conquer habit, are like those that are fabled to have returned from the realms of Pluto:

*Pauci, qui equis amavit
Jupiter, atque ardens vexit ad aethera virtus.*

They are sufficient to give hope, but not security; to animate the contest, but not to promise victory.

Those who are in the power of evil habits must conquer them as they can; and conquered they must be, or neither wisdom nor happiness can be attained: but those who are not yet subject to their influence may, by timely caution, preserve their freedom; they may effectually resolve to escape the tyrant, whom they will very vainly resolve to conquer.

Nº XXVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

IT is very easy for a man who sits idle at home, and has nobody to please but himself, to ridicule or to censure the common practices of mankind; and those who have no present temptation to break the rules of propriety, may applaud his judgment, and join in his merriment; but let the author or his readers mingle with common life, they will find themselves irresistibly borne away by the stream of custom, and must submit, after they have laughed at others, to give others the same opportunity of laughing at them.

There is no paper published by the Idler which I have read with more approbation than that which censures the practice of recording vulgar marriages in the news-papers. I carried it about in my pocket, and read it to all those whom I suspected of having published their nuptials, or of being inclined to publish them, and sent transcripts of it to all the couples that transgressed your precepts for the next fortnight. I hoped that they were all vexed, and pleased myself with imagining their misery.

But short is the triumph of malignity. I was married last week to Miss Mohair, the daughter of a salesman; and at my first appearance after the wedding night, was asked by my wife's mother, whether I had sent my marriage to the Advertiser? I endeavoured to shew how unfit it was to demand the attention of the public to our domestick affairs; but she told me, with great vehemence, That she would not have it thought to be a stolen match; that the blood of the Mohairs should never be disgraced; that her husband had served all the parish offices but one; that she had lived five and thirty years at the same house, had paid every body twenty shillings in the pound, and would have me know, though she was not as fine and as flaunting as Mrs. Gingham, the deputy's wife, she was not ashamed to tell her name, and would shew her face with the best of them; and since I had married her daughter— At this instant entered my father-in-law, a grave man, from whom I expected succour; but, upon hearing the case, he told me, That it would be very imprudent to miss such an opportunity of advertising

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my shop; and that, when notice was given of my marriage, many of my wife's friends would think themselves obliged to be my customers. I was subdued by clamour on one side, and gravity on the other; and shall be obliged to tell the town, that *three days ago*, Timothy Mushroom, an eminent oilman in Sea-Coal Lane, *was married to* Miss Polly Mohair of Lothbury, a beautiful young lady, with a large fortune.

I am, Sir, &c.

SIR,

I Am the unfortunate wife of the grocer whose letter you published about ten weeks ago; in which he complains, like a sorrow fellow, that I loiter in the shop with my needle-work in my hand, and that I oblige him to take me out on Sundays, and keep a girl to look after the child. Sweet Mr. Idler, if you did but know all, you would give no encouragement to such an unreasonable grumbler. I brought him three hundred pounds, which set him up in a shop, and bought in a stock, on which, with good management, we might live comfortably; but now I have given him a shop, I am forced to watch him and the shop too. I will tell you, Mr. Idler, how it is. There is an alehouse over the way with a ninepin alley, to which he is sure to run when I turn my back, and there loses his money, for he plays at ninepins as he does every thing else. While he is at this favourite sport, he sets a dirty boy to watch his door, and call him to his customers; but he is long in coming, and so rude when he comes, that our custom falls off every day.

Those who cannot govern themselves, must be governed. I have resolved to keep him for the future behind his counter, and let him bounce at his customers if he dares. I cannot be above stairs

and below at the same time, and have therefore taken a girl to look after the child and dress the dinner; and, after all, pray who is to blame?

On a Sunday, it is true, I make him walk abroad, and sometimes carry the child; I wonder who should carry it! But I never take him out till after church-time, nor would do it then, but that, if he is left alone, he will be upon the bed. On a Sunday, if he stays at home, he has six meals; and, when he cannot no longer, has twenty stratagems to escape from me to the alehouse; but I commonly keep the door locked, till Monday produces something for him to do.

This is the true state of the case, and these are the provocations for which he has written his letter to you. I hope you will write a paper to shew, that, if a wife must spend her whole time in watching her husband, he cannot conveniently tend her child, or sit at her needle. I am, Sir, &c.

SIR,

THERE is in this town a species of oppression which the law has not hitherto prevented or redressed.

I am a chairman. You know, Sir, we come when we are called, and are expected to carry all who require our assistance. It is common for men of the most unweildy corpulence to crowd themselves into a chair, and demand to be carried for a shilling as far as an airy young lady whom we scarcely feel upon our poles. Surely we ought to be paid like all other mortals in proportion to our labour. Engines should be fixed in proper places to weigh chairs as they weigh waggons; and those whom ease and plenty have made unable to carry themselves, should give part of their superfluities to those who carry them.

I am, Sir, &c.

N^O. XXIX. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Have often observed, that friends are lost by discontinuance of intercourse without any offence on either part; and have long known, that it is more dangerous to be forgotten than to be blam-

ed; I therefore make haste to send you the rest of my story, lest, by the delay of another fortnight, the name of Betty Broom might be no longer remembered by you or your readers.

Having left the last place in haste to avoid the charge of the suspicion of theft,

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I had not secured another service, and was forced to take a lodging in a back street. I had now got good cloaths. The woman who lived in the garret opposite to mine was very officious, and offered to take care of my room and clean it, while I went round to my acquaintance to enquire for a mistress. I knew not why she was so kind, or how I could recompense her; but in a few days I missed some of my linen, went to another lodging, and resolved not to have another friend in the next garret.

In six weeks I became under-maid at the house of a mercer in Cornhill, whose son was his apprentice. The young gentleman used to sit late at the tavern, without the knowledge of his father; and I was ordered by my mistress to let him in silently to his bed under the counter, and to be very careful to take away his candle. The hours which I was obliged to watch, whilst the rest of the family was in bed, I considered as supernumerary, and, having no business assigned for them, thought myself at liberty to spend them my own way. I kept myself awake with a book, and for some time liked my state the better for this opportunity of reading. At last, the upper-maid found my book, and shewed it to my mistress, who told me, that wenches like me might spend their time better; that she never knew any of the readers that had good designs in their heads; that she could always find something else to do with her time, than to puzzle over books; and did not like that such a fine lady should sit up for her young master.

This was the first time that I found it thought criminal or dangerous to know how to read. I was dismissed decently, lest I should tell tales, and had a small gratuity above my wages.

I then lived with a gentlewoman of a small fortune. This was the only happy part of my life. My mistress, for whom public diversions were too expensive, spent her time with books, and was pleased to find a maid who could partake her amusements. I rose early in the morning, that I might have time in the afternoon to read or listen, and was suffered to tell my opinion, or express my delight. Thus fifteen months stole away, in which I did not repine that I was born to servitude. But a burning fever seized my mistress, of whom

I shall say no more, than that her servant wept upon her grave.

I had lived in a kind of luxury, which made me very unfit for another place; and was rather too delicate for the conversation of a kitchen; so that when I was hired in the family of an East India director, my behaviour was so different, as they said, from that of a common servant, that they concluded me a gentlewoman in disguise, and turned me out in three weeks, on suspicion of some design which they could not comprehend.

I then fled for refuge to the other end of the town, where I hoped to find no obstruction from my new accomplishments, and was hired under the housekeeper in a splendid family. Here I was too wise for the maids, and too nice for the footmen; yet I might have lived on without such uneasiness, had not my mistress, the housekeeper, who used to employ me in buying necessaries for the family, found a bill which I had made of one day's expences. I suppose it did not quite agree with her own book, for she fiercely declared her resolution, that there should be no pen and ink in that kitchen but her own.

She had the justice, or the prudence, not to injure my reputation; and I was easily admitted into another house in the neighbourhood, where my business was to sweep the rooms and make the beds. Here I was, for some time, the favourite of Mrs. Simper, my lady's woman, who could not bear the vulgar girls, and was happy in the attendance of a young woman of some education. Mrs. Simper loved a novel, though she could not read hard words; and therefore, when her lady was abroad, we always laid hold on her books. At last, my abilities became so much celebrated, that the house-steward used to employ me in keeping his accounts. Mrs. Simper then found out, that my sauciness was grown to such a height that nobody could endure it, and told my lady, that there never had been a room well swept since Betty Broom came into the house.

I was then hired by a consumptive lady, who wanted a maid that could read and write. I attended her four years, and though she was never pleased, yet when I declared my resolution to leave her, she burst into tears, and told me that I must bear the peevishness of a sick

sick bed, and I should find myself remembered in her will. I complied, and a codicil was added in my favour; but in less than a week, when I set her gruel before her, I laid the spoon on the left side, and she threw her will into the fire. In two days she made another, which she burnt in the same manner because she could not eat her chicken. A third was made, and destroyed because she heard a mouse within the wainscot, and was sure that I should suffer her to be carried

away alive. After this I was for some time out of favour; but as her illness grew upon her, resentment and sullenness gave way to kinder sentiments. She died, and left me five hundred pounds. With this fortune I am going to settle in my native parish, where I resolve to spend some hours every day in teaching poor girls to read and write. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

BETTY BROOM.

N^o XXX. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11.

THE desires of a man increase with his acquisitions; every step which he advances brings something within his view, which he did not see before, and which, as soon as he sees it, he begins to want. Where necessity ends, curiosity begins, and no sooner are we supplied with every thing that nature can demand, than we sit down to contrive artificial appetites.

By this restlessness of mind, every populous and wealthy city is filled with innumerable employments, for which the greater part of mankind is without a name; with artificers, whose labour is exerted in producing such petty conveniences, that many shops are furnished with instruments, of which the use can hardly be found without enquiry, but which he that once knows them quickly learns to number among necessary things.

Such is the diligence with which, in countries completely civilized, one part of mankind labours for another, that wants are supplied faster than they can be formed, and the idle and luxurious find life stagnate for want of some desire to keep it in motion. This species of distress furnishes a new set of occupations; and multitudes are busied, from day to day, in finding the rich and the fortunate something to do.

It is very common to reproach those artists as useless, who produce only such superfluities as neither accommodate the body nor improve the mind; and of which no other effect can be imagined, than that they are the occasions of spending money, and consuming time.

But this censure will be mitigated, when it is seriously considered, that mo-

ney and time are the heaviest burthens of life, and that the unhappiest of all mortals are those who have more of either than they know how to use. To set himself free from these incumbrances, one hurries to Newmarket; another travels over Europe; one pulls down his house and calls architects about him; another buys a seat in the country, and follows his hounds over hedges and through rivers; one makes collections of shells; and another searches the world for tulips and carnations.

He is surely a public benefactor who finds employment for those to whom it is thus difficult to find it for themselves. It is true that this is seldom done merely from generosity or compassion; almost every man seeks his own advantage in helping others, and therefore it is too common for mercenary officiousness to consider rather what is grateful, than what is right.

We all know that it is more profitable to be loved than esteemed; and ministers of pleasure will always be found, who study to make themselves necessary, and to supplant those who are practising the same arts.

One of the amusements of idleness is reading without the fatigue of close attention, and the world therefore swarms with writers whose wish is not to be studied, but to be read.

No species of literary men has lately been so much multiplied as the writers of news. Not many years ago, the nation was content with one Gazette; but now we have not only in the metropolis papers for every morning and every evening, but almost every large town has its weekly historian, who regularly circulates

circulates his periodical intelligence, and fills the villages of his district with conjectures on the events of war, and with debates on the true interest of Europe.

To write news in it's perfection requires such a combination of qualities, that a man completely fitted for the task is not always to be found. In Sir Henry Wotton's jocular definition, *an Ambassador is said to be a man of virtue sent abroad to tell lies for the advantage of his country; a News-writer is a man without virtue, who writes lies at home for his own profit.* To these compositions is required neither genius nor knowledge, neither industry nor sprightliness; but contempt of shame and indifference to truth are absolutely necessary. He who by a long familiarity with infamy has obtained these qualities, may confidently tell to-day what he intends to contradict to-morrow: he may affirm fearlessly what he knows that he shall be obliged to recant, and may write letters from Amsterdam or Dresden to himself.

In a time of war the nation is always

of one mind, eager to hear something good of themselves and ill of the enemy. At this time the task of news-writers is easy: they have nothing to do but to tell that a battle is expected, and afterwards that a battle has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing.

Scarce anything awakes attention like a tale of cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermission of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and ravished virgins; and if the scene of action be somewhat distant, scalps half the inhabitants of a province.

Among the calamities of war may be justly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falsehoods which interest dictates and credulity encourages. A peace will equally leave the warrior and relator of wars destitute of employment; and I know not whether more is to be dreaded from streets filled with soldiers accustomed to plunder, or from garrets filled with scribblers accustomed to lie.

Nº XXXI. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18.

MANY moralists have remarked, that pride has of all human vices the widest dominion, appears in the greatest multiplicity of forms, and lies hid under the greatest variety of disguises; of disguises, which, like the moon's *veil of brightness*, are both it's *lustre* and it's *shade*, and betray it to others, though they hide it from ourselves.

It is not my intention to degrade pride from this pre-eminence of mischief; yet I know not whether idleness may not maintain a very doubtful and obstinate competition.

There are some that profess idleness in it's full dignity, who call themselves the *Idle*, as *Busiris* in the play calls himself the *Proud*; who boast that they do nothing, and thank their stars that they have nothing to do; who sleep every night till they can sleep no longer, and rise only that exercise may enable them to sleep again; who prolong the reign of darkness by double curtains, and never see the sun but to tell him how they hate his beams; whose whole labour is to vary the postures of indulgence, and whose

day differs from the night but as a couch or chair differs from a bed.

These are the true and open votaries of Idleness, for whom she weaves the garlands of poppies, and into whose cup she pours the waters of oblivion; who exist in a state of unruffled stupidity, forgetting and forgotten; who have long ceased to live, and at whose death the survivors can only say, that they have ceased to breathe.

But idleness predominates in many lives where it is not suspected; for, being a vice which terminates in itself, it may be enjoyed without injury to others; and is therefore not watched like fraud, which endangers property; or like pride, which naturally seeks it's gratifications in another's inferiority. Idleness is a silent and peaceful quality, that neither raises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposition; and therefore nobody is busy to censure or detect it.

As pride sometimes is hid under humility, idleness is often covered by turbulence and hurry. He that neglects his known duty and real employment, naturally

naturally endeavours to crowd his mind with something that may bar out the remembrance of his own folly, and does any thing but what he ought to do with eager diligence, that he may keep himself in his own favour.

Some are always in a state of preparation, occupied in previous measures, forming plans, accumulating materials, and providing for the main affair. These are certainly under the secret power of Idleness. Nothing is to be expected from the workman whose tools are for ever to be sought. I was once told by a great master, that no man ever excelled in painting, who was eminently curious about pencils and colours.

There are others to whom Idleness dictates another expedient, by which life may be passed unprofitably away without the tediousness of many vacant hours. The art is, to fill the day with petty business, to have always something in hand which may raise curiosity, but not solicitude, and keep the mind in a state of action, but not of labour.

This art has for many years been practised by my old friend Sober with wonderful success. Sober is a man of strong desires and quick imagination, so exactly balanced by the love of ease, that they can seldom stimulate him to any difficult undertaking: they have, however, so much power, that they will not suffer him to lie quite at rest; and though they do not make him sufficiently useful to others, they make him at least weary of himself.

Mr. Sober's chief pleasure is conversation; there is no end of his talk or his attention; to speak or hear is equally pleasing, for he still fancies that he is teaching or learning something, and is free for the time from his own reproaches.

But there is one time at night when he must go home, that his friends may sleep; and another time in the morning, when all the world agrees to shut out interruption. These are the moments which poor Sober trembles at the thought. But the misery of these tiresome intervals he has many means of alleviating. He has persuaded himself, that the manual arts are undeservedly overlooked; he has observed in many trades the effects of close thought, and just ratiocination. From speculation he proceeded to practice, and supplied himself with the tools of a carpenter, with which he mended his coal-box very successfully, and which he still continues to employ, as he finds occasion.

He has attempted at other times the crafts of the shoe-maker, tin-man, plumber, and potter; in all these arts he has failed, and resolves to qualify himself for them by better information. But his daily amusement is chemistry. He has a small furnace, which he employs in distillation, and which has long been the solace of his life. He draws oils and waters, and essences and spirits, which he knows to be of no use; sits and counts the drops as they come from his retort, and forgets that, whilst a drop is falling, a moment flies away.

Poor Sober! I have often teased him with reproof, and he has often promised reformation; for no man is so much open to conviction as the Idler, but there is none on whom it operates so little. What will be the effect of this paper I know not; perhaps he will read it and laugh, and light the fire in his furnace; but my hope is, that he will quit his trifles, and betake himself to rational and useful diligence.

N° XXXII, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25.

AMONG the innumerable mortifications that way-lay human arrogance on every side, may well be reckoned our ignorance of the most common objects and effects, a defect of which we become more sensible by every attempt to supply it. Vulgar and inactive minds confound familiarity with knowledge, and conceive themselves informed of the whole nature of things

when they are shewn their form or told their use; but the speculatist, who is not content with superficial views, harasses himself with fruitless curiosity, and still as he enquires more, perceives only that he knows less.

Sleep is a state in which a great part of every life is passed. No animal has been yet discovered, whose existence is not varied with intervals of insensibility; and

and some late philosophers have extended the empire of Sleep over the vegetable world.

Yet of this change, so frequent, so great, so general, and so necessary, no searcher has yet found either the efficient or final cause; or can tell by what power the mind and body are thus chained down in irresistible stupefaction; or what benefits the animal receives from this alternate suspension of it's active powers.

Whatever may be the multiplicity or contrariety of opinions upon this subject, Nature has taken sufficient care that theory shall have little influence on practice. The most diligent enquirer is not able long to keep his eyes open; the most eager disputant will begin about midnight to desert his argument; and, once in four and twenty hours, the gay and the gloomy, the witty and the dull, the clamorous and the silent, the busy and the idle, are all overpowered by the gentle tyrant, and all lie down in the equality of sleep.

Philosophy has often attempted to repel its insolence, by asserting, that all conditions are levelled by death; a position which, however it may deject the happy, will seldom afford much comfort to the wretched. It is far more pleasing to consider, that sleep is equally a leveller with death; that the time is never at a great distance, when the balm of rest shall be effused alike upon every head, when the diversities of life shall stop their operation, and the high and the low shall lie down together.

It is somewhere recorded of Alexander, that in the pride of conquests, and intoxication of flattery, he declared that he only perceived himself to be a man by the necessity of sleep. Whether he considered sleep as necessary to his mind or body, it was indeed a sufficient evidence of human infirmity; the body which required such a frequency of renovation gave the faint promises of immortality; and the mind which, from time to time, sunk gladly into insensibility, had made no very near approaches to the felicity of the supreme and self-sufficient Nature.

I know not what can tend more to repress all the passions that disturb the peace of the world, than the consideration that there is no height of happiness or honour, from which man does not eagerly descend to a state of unconscious repose; that the best condition of life is

such, that we contentedly quit it's good to be disentangled from it's evils; that in a few hours splendor fades before the eye, and praise itself deadens in the ear; the senses withdraw from their objects, and reason favours the retreat.

What then are the hopes and prospects of covetousness, ambition, and rapacity? Let him that desires most have all his desires gratified, he never shall attain a state, which he can, for a day and a night, contemplate with satisfaction, or from which, if he had the power of perpetual vigilance, he would not long for periodical separations.

All envy would be extinguished, if it were universally known that there are none to be envied, and surely none can be much envied who are not pleased with themselves. There is reason to suspect, that the distinctions of mankind have more shew than value, when it is found that all agree to be weary alike of pleasures and of cares; that the powerful and the weak, the celebrated and obscure, join in one common wish, and implore from Nature's hand the nectar of oblivion.

Such is our desire of abstraction from ourselves, that very few are satisfied with the quantity of stupefaction which the needs of the body force upon the mind. Alexander himself added intemperance to sleep, and solaced with the fumes of wine the sovereignty of the world; and almost every man has some art, by which he steals his thoughts away from his present state.

It is not much of life that is spent in close attention to any important duty. Many hours of every day are suffered to fly away without any traces left upon the intellects. We suffer phantoms to rise up before us, and amuse ourselves with the dance of airy images, which, after a time, we dismiss for ever, and know not how we have been busied.

Many have no happier moments than those that they pass in solitude, abandoned to their own imagination, which sometimes put sceptres in their hands or mitres on their heads, shifts the scene of pleasure with endless variety, bids all the forms of beauty sparkle before them, and gluts them with every change of visionary luxury.

It is easy in these semi-slumbers to collect all the possibilities of happiness, to alter the course of the sun, to bring back the past, and anticipate the future, to

unite all the beauties of all seasons, and all the blessings of all climates, to receive and bestow felicity, and forget that misery is the lot of man. All this is a voluntary dream, a temporary recession from the realities of life to airy fictions; and habitual subjection of reason to fancy.

Others are afraid to be alone, and amuse themselves by a perpetual succession of companions: but the difference is not great; in solitude we have our dreams to ourselves, and in company we agree to dream in concert. The end sought in both is forgetfulness of ourselves.

N^o XXXIII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2.

[I hope the Author of the following letter will excuse the omission of some parts, and allow me to remark, that the Journal of the Citizen in the Spectator has almost precluded the attempt of any future Writer.]

— NON ITA ROMULI
PRÆSCRIPTUM, ET INTONSI CATONIS
AUSPICIIS VETERUMQUE NORMA.

HOR.

SIR,
YOU have often solicited correspondence. I have sent you the *Journal of a senior Fellow, or genuine Idler*, just transmitted from Cambridge by a facetious correspondent, and warranted to have been transcribed from the common-place book of the journalist.

Monday, Nine o'clock. Turned off my bed-maker for waking me at eight. Weather rainy. Consulted my weather-glass. No hopes of a ride before dinner.

Ditto, Ten. After breakfast, transcribed half a sermon from Dr. Hickman. *N. B.* Never to transcribe any more from Catany; Mrs. Pilcocks, at my curacy, having one volume of that author lying in the parlour window.

Ditto, Eleven. Went down into my cellar. *Mem.* My Mountain will be fit to drink in a month's time. *N. B.* To remove the five-year-old Port into the new bin on the left hand.

Ditto, Twelve. Mended a pen. Looked at my weather-glass again. Quicksilver very low. Shaved. Barber's hand shakes.

Ditto, One. Dined alone in my room on a foal. *N. B.* The shrimp-sauce not so good as Mr. H. of Peterhouse and I used to eat in London last winter at the Mitre in Fleet Street. Sat down to a pint of Madeira. Mr. H. surprized me over it. We finished two bottles of Port together, and were very chearful. *Mem.* To dine with Mr. H. at Peterhouse next Wednesday. One of the dishes a leg of pork and pease, by my desire.

Ditto, Six. News-paper in the Common-room.

Ditto, Seven. Returned to my room. Made a tiff of warm punch, and to bed before nine; did not fall asleep till ten, a young fellow-commoner being very noisy over my head.

Tuesday, Nine. Rose squeamish. A fine morning. Weather-glass very high.

Ditto, Ten. Ordered my horse, and rode to the five-mile stone on the New-market road. Appetite gets better. A pack of hounds, in full cry, crossed the road, and startled my horse.

Ditto, Twelve. Drest. Found a letter on my table to be in London the 19th instant. Bespoke a new wig.

Ditto, One. At dinner in the hall. Too much water in the soup. Dr. Dry always orders the beef to be salted too much for me.

Ditto, Two. In the Common-room. Dr. Dry gave us an instance of a gentleman who kept the gout out of his stomach by drinking old Madeira. Conversation chiefly on the expeditions. Company broke up at four. Dr. Dry and myself played at back-gammon for a brace of snipes. Won.

Ditto, Five. At the coffee-house. Met Mr. H. there. Could not get a sight of the Monitor.

Ditto, Seven. Returned home, and stirred my fire. Went to the Common-room, and supped on the snipes with Dr. Dry.

Ditto, Eight. Began the evening in the Common-room. Dr. Dry told several

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ral stories. Were very merry. Our new fellow, that studies physic, very talkative towards twelve. Pretends he will bring the youngest Miss — to drink tea with me soon. Impertinent blockhead!

Wednesday, Nine. Alarmed with a pain in my ancle. 2. The gout? Fear I can't dine at Peterhouse; but I hope a ride with set all to rights. Weather-glass below Fair.

Ditto, Ten. Mounted my horse, though the weather suspicious. Pain in my ancle entirely gone. Caught in a shower coming back. Convinced that my weather-glass is the best in Cambridge.

Ditto, Twelve. Drest. Sauntered up to the Fishmongers Hill. Met Mr. H. and went with him to Peterhouse. Cook made us wait thirty-six minutes beyond the time. The company, some of my Emanuel friends. For dinner, a pair of foals, a leg of pork and pease, among other things. *Mem.* Pease-pudding not boiled enough. Cook reprimanded and scolded in my presence.

Ditto, after dinner. Pain in my ancle returns. Dull all the afternoon. Kaillied for being no company. Mr. H.'s account of the accommodations on the road in his Bath journey.

Ditto, Six. Got into spirits. Never was more chatty. We sat late at whist. Mr. H. and self agreed at parting to take a gentle ride, and dine at the old house on the London road to-morrow.

Thursday, Nine. My sempstress. She has lost the measure of my wrist. Forced to be measured again. The baggage has got a trick of smiling.

Ditto, Ten to Eleven. Made some rappee-snuff. Read the magazines. Received a present of pickles from Miss Pilcocks. *Mem.* To send in return some collared eel, which I know both the old Lady and Miss are fond of.

Ditto, Eleven. Glass very high. Mounted at the gate with Mr. H. Horlickittish and wants exercise. Arrive at the old house. All the provisions bespoke by some rakish fellow-commoner in the next room, who had been on a scheme to Newmarket. Could get nothing but mutton-chops off the worst end. Port very new. Agree to try some other house to-morrow.

Here the Journal breaks off: for the next morning, as my friend informs me,

our genial Academic was waked with a severe fit of the gout; and, at present, enjoys all the dignity of that disease. But I believe we have lost nothing by this interruption; since a continuation of the remainder of the journal, through the remainder of the week, would most probably have exhibited nothing more than a repeated relation of the same circumstances of Idling and luxury.

I hope it will not be concluded from this specimen of Academic life, that I have attempted to decry our universities. If literature is not the essential requisite of the modern academic, I am yet persuaded, that Cambridge and Oxford, however degenerated, surpass the fashionable Academies of our metropolis, and the Gymnasia of foreign countries. The number of learned persons in these celebrated seats is still considerable, and more conveniences and opportunities for study still subsist in them, than in any other place. There is at least one very powerful incentive to learning; I mean the *Genius of the place*. It is a sport of inspiring Deity, which every youth of quick sensibility and ingenuous disposition creates to himself, by reflecting, that he is placed under those venerable walls, where a Hooker and a Hammond, a Bacon and a Newton, once pursued the same course of science, and from whence they soared to the most elevated heights of literary fame. This is that incitement which Tully, according to his own testimony, experienced at Athens, when he contemplated the porticos where Socrates sat, and the laurel-groves where Plato disputed. But there are other circumstances, and of the highest importance, which render our colleges superior to all other places of education. Their institutions, although somewhat fallen from their primæval simplicity, are such as influence, in a particular manner, the moral conduct of their youth; and in this general depravity of manners and laxity of principles, pure religion is no where more strongly inculcated. The Academies, as they are presumptuously styled, are too low to be mentioned; and foreign seminaries are likely to prejudice the unwary mind with Calvinism. But English universities render their students virtuous, at least by excluding all opportunities of vice; and, by teaching them the principles of the Church of England, confirm them in those of true Christianity.

rower; the dining-room is so crowded with tables, that dinner scarcely can be served; the parlour is decorated with so many piles of china, that I dare not step within the door; at every turn of the stairs I have a clock, and half the windows of the upper floors are darkened, that shelves may be set before them.

This, however, might be borne, if she would gratify her own inclinations without opposing mine. But I who am idle am luxurious, and she condemns me to live upon salt provision. She knows the loss of buying in small quantities, we have therefore whole hogs and quarters of oxen. Part of our meat is tainted before it is eaten, and part is thrown away because it is spoiled; but she persists in her system, and will never buy any thing by single pennyworths.

The common vice of those who are still grasping at more, is to neglect that which they already possess; but from this failing my charmer is free. It is the great care of her life that the pieces of beef should be boiled in the order in which they are bought; that the second bag of peas should not be opened till the first are eaten; that every feather-bed shall be lain on in its turn; that the carpets should be taken out of the chests

once a month and brushed, and the rolls of linen opened now and then before the fire. She is daily enquiring after the best traps for mice, and keeps the rooms always scented by fumigations to destroy the moths. She employs workmen, from time to time, to adjust six clocks that never go, and clean five jacks that rust in the garret; and a woman in the next alley lives by scouring the brass and pewter, which are only laid up to tarnish again.

She is always imagining some distant time in which she shall use whatever she accumulates; she has four looking-glasses which she cannot hang up in her house, but which will be handsome in more lofty rooms; and pays rent for the place of a vast copper in some ware-house, because when we live in the country we shall brew our own beer.

Of this life I have long been weary, but know not how to change it: all the married men whom I consult advise me to have patience; but some old bachelors are of opinion, that since she loves sales so well, she should have a sale of her own; and I have, I think, resolved to open her hoards, and advertise an auction. I am, Sir, your very humble servant,

PETER PLENTY.

N° XXXVI. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23.

THE great differences that disturb the peace of mankind are not about ends, but means. We have all the same general desires, but how those desires shall be accomplished will for ever be disputed. The ultimate purpose of government is temporal, and that of religion is eternal happiness. Hitherto we agree; but here we must part, to try, according to the endless varieties of passion and understanding combined with one another, every possible form of government, and every imaginable tenet of religion.

We are told by Cumberland, that *rectitude*, applied to action or contemplation, is merely metaphorical; and that as a *right* line describes the shortest passage from point to point, so a *right* action effects a good design by the fewest means; and so likewise a *right* opinion is that which connects distant

truths by the shortest train of intermediate propositions.

To find the nearest way from truth to truth, or from purpose to effect, not to use more instruments where fewer will be sufficient, not to move by wheels and levers what will give way to the naked hand, is the great proof of a healthful and vigorous mind, neither feeble with helpless ignorance, nor overburdened with unwieldy knowledge.

But there are men who seem to think nothing so much the characteristic of a genius, as to do common things in an uncommon manner; like Hudibras, to *tell the clock by algebra*; or like the Lady in Dr. Young's Satires, to *drink tea by stratagem*: to quit the beaten track only because it is known, and take a new path, however crooked or rough, because the straight was found out before.

Every man speaks and writes with in-

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tent to be understood, and it can seldom happen but he that understands himself might convey his notions to another, if, content to be understood, he did not seek to be admired; but when once he begins to contrive how his sentiments may be received, not with most ease to his reader, but with most advantage to himself, he then transfers his consideration from words to sounds, from sentences to periods, and as he grows more elegant becomes less intelligible.

It is difficult to enumerate every species of authors whose labours counteract themselves: the man of exuberance and copiousness, who diffuses every thought through so many diversities of expression, that it is lost like water in a mist; the ponderous dictator of sentences, whose notions are delivered in the lump, and are, like uncoined bullion, of more weight than use; the liberal illustrator, who shews by examples and comparisons what was clearly seen when it was first proposed; and the stately son of demonstration, who proves with mathematical formality what no man has yet pretended to doubt.

There is a mode of style for which I know not that the masters of oratory have yet found a name, a style by which the most evident truths are so obscured, that they can no longer be perceived, and the most familiar propositions so disguised that they cannot be known. Every other kind of eloquence is the dress of sense; but this is the mask by which a true master of his art will so effectually conceal it, that a man will as easily mistake his own positions, if he meets them thus transformed, as he may pass in a masquerade his nearest acquaintance.

This style may be called the *terrific*, for it's chief intention is to terrify and amaze; it may be termed the *repulsive*, for it's natural effect is to drive away the reader; or it may be distinguished, in plain English, by the denomination of the *bugbear style*, for it has more terror than danger, and will appear less formidable as it is more nearly approached.

A mother tells her infant that *two and two make four*; the child remem-

bers the proposition, and is able to count four to all the purposes of life, till the course of his education brings him among philosophers, who fright him from his former knowledge, by telling him, that four is a certain aggregate of units; that all numbers being only the repetition of an unit, which, though not a number itself, is the parent, root, or original of all number, *four* is the denomination assigned to a certain number of such repetitions. The only danger is, lest, when he first hears these dreadful sounds, the pupil should run away; if he has but the courage to stay till the conclusion, he will find that, when speculation has done it's worst, two and two still make four.

An illustrious example of this species of eloquence may be found in *Letters concerning the Mind*. The author begins by declaring, that *the sorts of things are things that now are, have been, and shall be, and the things that strictly ARE*. In this position, except the last clause, in which he uses something of the scholastick language, there is nothing but what every man has heard and imagines himself to know. But who would not believe that some wonderful novelty is presented to his intellect, when he is afterwards told, in the true bugbear style, that *the Ares, in the former sense, are things that lie between the Have-beens and Shall-bes. The Have-beens are things that are past; the Shall-bes are things that are to come; and the things that ARE, in the latter sense, are things that have not been, nor shall be, nor stand in the midst of such as are before them or shall be after them. The things that have been, and shall be, have respect to present, past, and future. Those likewise that now ARE have more-over place; that, for instance, which is here, that which is to the East, that which is to the West.*

All this, my dear reader, is very strange; but though it be strange, it is not new, survey these wonderful sentences again, and they will be found to contain nothing more than very plain truths, which till this author arose had always been delivered in plain language.

N^o XXXVII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30.

THOSE who are skilled in the extraction and preparation of metals, declare, that iron is every where to be found; and that not only it's proper ore is copiously treasured in the caverns of the earth, but that it's particles are dispersed throughout all other bodies.

If the extent of the human view could comprehend the whole frame of the universe, I believe it would be found invariably true, that Providence has given that in greatest plenty, which the condition of life makes of greatest use; and that nothing is penuriously imparted or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal distribution, or more easy acquisition, would increase real and rational felicity.

Iron is common, and gold is rare. Iron contributes so much to supply the wants of nature, that it's use constitutes much of the difference between savage and polished life, between the state of him that slumbers in European palaces, and him that shelters himself in the cavities of a rock from the chiliness of the night, or the violence of the storm. Gold can never be hardened into saws or axes; it can neither furnish instruments of manufacture, utensils of agriculture, nor weapons of defence; it's only quality is to shine, and the value of it's lustre arises from it's scarcity.

Throughout the whole circle, both of natural and moral life, necessities are as iron, and superfluities as gold. What we really need, we may readily obtain; so readily, that far the greater part of mankind has, in the wantonness of abundance, confounded natural with artificial desires, and invented necessities for the sake of employment, because the mind is impatient of inaction, and life is sustained with so little labour, that the tediousness of idle time cannot otherwise be supported.

Thus plenty is the original cause of many of our needs; and even the poverty, which is so frequent and distressful in civilized nations, proceeds often from that change of manners which opulence has produced. Nature makes us poor only when we want necessities, but custom gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities.

When Socrates passed through shops of toys and ornaments, he cried out—'How many things are here which I do not need!' And the same exclamation may every man make who surveys the common accommodations of life.

Superfluity and difficulty begin together. To dress food for the stomach is easy; the art is to irritate the palate when the stomach is sufficed. A rude hand may build walls, form roofs; and lay floors; and provide all that warmth and security require; we only call the nicer artificers to carve the cornice, or to paint the cielings. Such dress as may enable the body to endure the different seasons; the most unenlightened nations have been able to procure; but the work of science begins in the ambition of distinction, in variations of fashion, and emulation of elegance. Corn grows with easy culture, the gardener's experiments are only employed to exalt the flavours of fruits; and brighten the colours of flowers.

Even of knowledge, those parts are most easy which are generally necessary. The intercourse of society is maintained without the elegances of language. Figures, criticisms, and refinements, are the work of those whom idleness makes weary of themselves. The commerce of the world is carried on by easy methods of computation. Subtlety and study are required only when questions are invented merely to puzzle; and calculations are extended to shew the skill of the calculator. The light of the sun is equally beneficial to him whose eyes tell him that it moves, and to him whose reason persuades him that it stands still; and plants grow with the same luxuriance, whether we suppose earth or water the parent of vegetation.

If we raise our thoughts to nobler enquiries, we shall still find facility concurring with usefulness. No man needs stay to be virtuous till the moralists have determined the essence of virtue; our duty is made apparent by it's proximate consequences, though the general and ultimate reason should never be discovered. Religion may regulate the life of him to whom the *Scotists* and *Thomists*

misfs are alike unknown; and the assertors of fate and free-will, however different in their talk, agree to act in the same manner.

It is not my intention to depreciate the politer arts or abstruser studies. That curiosity which always succeeds ease and plenty was undoubtedly given us as a proof of capacity which our present state is not able to fill, as a preparative for some better mode of existence,

which shall furnish employment for the whole soul, and where pleasure shall be adequate to our powers of fruition. In the mean time, let us gratefully acknowledge that goodness which grants us ease at a cheap rate, which changes the seasons where the nature of heat and cold has not been yet examined, and gives the vicissitudes of day and night to those who never marked the tropicks, or numbered the constellations.

N° XXXVIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 6.

SINCE the publication of the letter concerning the condition of those who are confined in gaols by their creditors, an enquiry is said to have been made, by which it appears that more than * twenty thousand are at this time prisoners for debt.

We often look with indifference on the successive parts of that, which if the whole were seen together, would shake us with emotion. A debtor is dragged to prison, pitied for a moment, and then forgotten; another follows him, and is lost alike in the caverns of oblivion; but when the whole mass of calamity rises up at once, when twenty thousand reasonable beings are heard all groaning in unnecessary misery, not by the infirmity of nature, but the mistake or negligence of policy, who can forbear to pity and lament, to wonder and abhor!

There is here no need of declamatory vehemence; we live in an age of commerce and computation; let us therefore coolly enquire what is the sum of evil which the imprisonment of debtors brings upon our country.

It seems to be the opinion of the later computists, that the inhabitants of England do not exceed six millions, of which twenty thousand is the three-hundredth part. What shall we say of the humanity or the wisdom of a nation, that voluntarily sacrifices one in every three hundred to lingering destruction!

The misfortunes of an individual do not extend their influence to many; yet,

if we consider the effects of consanguinity and friendship, and the general reciprocation of wants and benefits, which make one man dear or necessary to another, it may reasonably be supposed, that every man languishing in prison gives trouble of some kind to two others who love or need him. By this multiplication of misery we see distress extended to the hundredth part of the whole society.

If we estimate at a shilling a day what is lost by the inaction and consumed in the support of each man thus chained down to involuntary idleness, the publick loss will rise in one year to three hundred thousand pounds; in ten years to more than a sixth part of our circulating coin.

I am afraid that those who are best acquainted with the state of our prisons, will confess that my conjecture is too near the truth, when I suppose that the corrosion of resentment, the heaviness of sorrow, the corruption of confined air, the want of exercise, and sometimes of food, the contagion of diseases, from which there is no retreat, and the severity of tyrants, against whom there can be no resistance, and all the complicated horrors of a prison, put an end every year to the life of one in four of those that are shut up from the common comforts of human life.

Thus perish yearly five thousand men, overborne with sorrow, consumed by famine, or putrified by filth; many of them in the most vigorous and useful

* This number was at that time confidently published; but the author has since found reason to question the calculation.

part of life; for the thoughtless and imprudent are commonly young, and the active and busy are seldom old.

According to the rule generally received, which supposes that one in thirty dies yearly, the race of man may be said to be renewed at the end of thirty years. Who would have believed till now, that of every English generation, an hundred and fifty thousand perish in our gaols! that in every century, a nation eminent for science, studious of commerce, ambitious of empire, should willingly lose, in noisome dungeons, five hundred thousand of it's inhabitants; a number greater than has ever been destroyed in the same time by the pestilence and sword!

A very late occurrence may shew us the value of the number which we thus condemn to be useless; in the re-establishment of the Trained Bands, twenty thousand are considered as a force sufficient against all exigences. While, therefore, we detain twenty thousand in prison, we shut up in darkness and uselessness two thirds of an army which ourselves judge equal to the defence of our country.

The monastick institutions have been often blamed, as tending to retard the increase of mankind. And perhaps retirement ought rarely to be permitted, except to those whose employment is consistent with abstraction, and who, though solitary, will not be idle; to those whom infirmity makes useless to the commonwealth, or to those who have paid their due proportion to society, and who, having lived for others, may be honourably dismissed to live for themselves. But whatever be the evil or the folly of these retreats, those have no right to censure them whose prisons contain greater numbers than the monasteries of other countries. It is, surely, less foolish and less criminal to permit inaction than compel it; to comply with doubtful opinions of happiness, than condemn to certain and apparent misery; to indulge the extravagances of erroneous piety, than to multiply and enforce temptations to wickedness.

The misery of gaols is not half their

evils: they are filled with every corruption which poverty and wickedness can generate between them; with all the shameless and profligate enormities that can be produced by the impudence of ignominy, the rage of want, and the malignity of despair. In a prison the awe of the publick eye is lost, and the power of the law is spent; there are few fears, there are no blushes. The lewd inflame the lewd, the audacious harden the audacious. Every one fortifies himself as he can against his own sensibility, endeavours to practise on others the arts which are practised on himself, and gains the kindness of his associates by similitude of manners.

Thus some sink amidst their misery, and others survive only to propagate villainy. It may be hoped, that our lawgivers will at length take away from us this power of starving and depraving one another: but, if there be any reason why this inveterate evil should not be removed in our age, which true policy has enlightened beyond any former time, let those, whose writings form the opinions and the practices of their contemporaries, endeavour to transfer the reproach of such imprisonment from the debtor to the creditor, till universal infamy shall pursue the wretch whose wantonness of power, or revenge of disappointment, condemns another to torture and to ruin; till he shall be hunted through the world as an enemy to man, and find in riches no shelter from contempt.

Surely, he whose debtor has perished in prison, though he may acquit himself of deliberate murder, must at least have his mind clouded with discontent, when he considers how much another has suffered from him; when he thinks on the wife bewailing her husband, or the children begging the bread which their father would have earned. If there are any made so obdurate by avarice or cruelty as to revolve these consequences without dread or pity, I must leave them to be awakened by some other power, for I write only to human beings.

N^o XXXIX. SATURDAY, JANUARY 13.

TO THE IDLER.

318,
A s none look more diligently about them than those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing, I suppose it has not escaped your observation, that the Bracelet, or ornament of great antiquity, has been for some years revived among the English ladies.

The genius of our nation is said, I know not for what reason, to appear rather in improvement than invention. The bracelet was known in the earliest ages; but it was formerly only a hoop of gold, or a cluster of jewels, and shewed nothing but the wealth or vanity of the wearer, till our ladies, by carrying pictures on their wrists, made their ornaments works of fancy and exercises of judgment.

This addition of art to luxury is one of the innumerable proofs that might be given of the late increase of female erudition; and I have often congratulated myself that my life has happened at a time when those, on whom so much of human felicity depends, have learned to think as well as speak, and when respect takes possession of the ear, while love is entering at the eye.

I have observed, that, even by the suffrages of their own sex, those ladies are accounted wisest, who do not yet disdain to be taught; and therefore I shall offer a few hints for the completion of the bracelet, without any dread of the fate of Orpheus.

To the ladies who wear the pictures of their husbands or children, or any other near relations, I can offer nothing more decent or more proper. It is reasonable to believe that she intends at least to perform her duty, who carries a perpetual excitement to recollection and caution, whose own ornaments must upbraid her with every failure, and who, by an open violation of her engagements, must for ever forfeit her bracelet.

Yet I know not whether it is the interest of the husband to solicit very earnestly a place on the bracelet. If his image be not in the heart, it is of small avail to hang it on the hand. A husband encircled with diamonds and rubies

may gain some esteem, but will never excite love. He that thinks himself most secure of his wife, should be fearful of persecuting her continually with his presence. The joy of life is variety; the tenderest love requires to be rekindled by intervals of absence; and Fidelity herself will be wearied with transferring her eye only from the same man to the same picture.

In many countries the condition of every woman is known by her dress. Marriage is rewarded with some honourable distinction which celibacy is forbidden to usurp. Some such information a bracelet might afford. The ladies might enroll themselves in distinct classes, and carry in open view the emblems of their order. The bracelet of the Authoress may exhibit the Muses in a grove of laurel; the Housewife may shew Penelope with her web; the Votress of a single life may carry Ursula with her troop of virgins; the Gamester may have Fortune with her wheel; and those women that *have no character at all*, may display a Field of white enamel, as imploring help to fill up the vacuity.

There is a set of ladies who have outlived most animal pleasures, and having nothing rational to put in their place, solace with cards the loss of what Time has taken away, and the want of what Wisdom, having never been courted, has never given. For these I know not how to provide a proper decoration. They cannot be numbered among the Gamesters, for though they are always at play, they play for nothing, and never rise to the dignity of hazard or the reputation of skill. They neither love nor are loved, and cannot be supposed to contemplate any human image with delight. Yet though they despair to please, they always wish to be fine, and therefore cannot be without a bracelet. To this sisterhood I can recommend nothing more likely to please them than the King of Clubs, a personage very comely and majestick, who will never meet their eyes without reviving the thought of some past or future party, and who may be displayed in the act of dealing with grace and propriety.

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But

But the bracelet which might be most easily introduced into general use is a small convex mirror, in which the lady may see herself whenever she shall lift her hand. This will be a perpetual source of delight. Other ornaments are of use only in publick, but this will furnish gratifications to solitude. This will shew a face that must always please; she who is followed by admirers will carry about her a perpetual justification of the public voice; and she who passes without notice may appeal from prejudice to her own eyes.

But I know not why the privilege of the bracelet should be confined to women; it was in former ages worn by heroes in battle; and as modern soldiers are always distinguished by splendour of dress, I should rejoice to see the bracelet added to the cockade.

In hope of this ornamental innovation, I have spent some thoughts upon military bracelets. There is no passion more heroic than love; and therefore I should be glad to see the sons of Eng-

land marching in the field, every man with the picture of a woman of honour bound upon his hand. But since in the army, as every where else, there will always be men who love nobody but themselves, or whom no woman of honour will permit to love her, there is a necessity of some other distinctions and devices.

I have read of a prince who, having lost a town, ordered the name of it to be every morning shouted in his ear till it should be recovered. For the same purpose I think the prospect of Minorca might be properly worn on the hands of some of our generals: others might delight their countrymen, and dignify themselves with a view of Rochfort as it appeared to them at sea: and those that shall return from the conquest of America, may exhibit the warehouse of Frontenac, with an inscription denoting, that it was taken in less than three years by less than twenty thousand men. I am, Sir, &c.

TOM TOY,

Nº XL. SATURDAY, JANUARY 20.

THE practice of appending to the narratives of public transactions more minute and domestic intelligence, and filling the news-papers with advertisements, has grown up by slow degrees to it's present state.

Genius is shewn only by invention. The man who first took advantage of the general curiosity that was excited by a siege or battle, to betray the readers of news into the knowledge of the shop where the best puffs and powder were to be sold, was undoubtedly a man of great sagacity, and profound skill in the nature of man. But when he had once shewn the way it was easy to follow him; and every man now knows a ready method of informing the publick of all that he desires to buy or sell, whether his wares be material or intellectual; whether he makes cloaths, or teaches the mathematics; whether he be a tutor that wants a pupil, or a pupil that wants a tutor.

Whatever is common is despised. Advertisements are now so numerous that they are very negligently perused; and it is therefore become necessary to gain attention by magnificence or promises,

and by eloquence sometimes sublime and sometimes pathetic.

Promise, large promise, is the soul of an advertisement. I remember a *Wash-ball* that had a quality truly wonderful, it gave an exquisite edge to the razor. And there are now to be sold, for ready money only, some *Duvets* for bed-coverings, of down, beyond comparison superior to what is called *Otter Down*, and indeed such, that it's many excellencies cannot be here set forth. With one excellence we are made acquainted, *It is warmer than four or five blankets, and lighter than one.*

There are some, however, that know the prejudice of mankind in favour of modest sincerity. The vender of the *Beautifying Fluid* sells a lot on that repels pimples, washes away freckles, smoothes the skin, and plumps the flesh; and yet with a generous abhorrence of ostentation, confesses, that it will not restore the bloom of *fifties* to a lady of *fifty*.

The true pathos of advertisements must have sunk deep into the heart of every man that remembers the zeal shewn by the seller of the *Anodyne Necklace*, for

for the ease and safety of poor tooth-*ing* infants; and the affection with which he warned every mother, that *she would never forgive herself* if her infant should perish without a necklace.

I cannot but remark to the celebrated author who gave, in his notifications of the Camel and Dromedary, so many specimens of the genuine sublime, that there is now arrived another subject yet more worthy of his pen. *A famous Mohawk Indian Warrior, who took Dieckaw, the French general prisoner, dressed in the same manner with the native Indians when they go to war, with his face and body painted, with his scalping knife, Tom-ax, and all other implements of war: a sight worthy the curiosity of every true Briton!* This is a very powerful description; but a critic of great refinement would say that it conveys rather horror and terror. An Indian, dressed as he goes to war, may bring company together; but if he carries the scalping knife and tom-ax, there are many true Britons that will never be persuaded to see him but through a grate.

It has been remarked by the severer judges, that the salutary sorrow of tragic scenes is too soon effaced by the merriment of the epilogue; the same inconvenience arises from the improper disposition of advertisements. The noblest objects may be so associated as to be made ridiculous. The Camel and Dromedary themselves might have lost much of their dignity between *the true Flower of Mustard* and *the original Daffy's Elixir*; and I could not but feel some indignation when I found this illustrious Indian Warrior immediately succeeded by *a fresh parcel of Dublin butter*.

The trade of advertising is now so near to perfection, that it is not easy to propose any improvement. But as every art ought to be exercised in due subordi-

nation to the publick good, I cannot but propose it as a moral question to these matters of the publick ear, Whether they do not sometimes play too wantonly with our passions, as when the register of lottery tickets invites us to his shop by an account of the prize which he sold last year; and whether the advertising controvertists do not indulge asperity of language without any adequate provocation; as in the dispute about *Straps for Razors*, now happily subdued, and in the altercation which at present subsists concerning *Eau de Luce*.

In an advertisement it is allowed to every man to speak well of himself, but I know not why he should assume the privilege of censuring his neighbour. He may proclaim his own virtue or skill, but ought not to exclude others from the same pretensions.

Every man that advertises his own excellence, should write with some consciousness of a character which dares to call the attention of the publick. He should remember that his name is to stand in the same paper with those of the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Germany, and endeavour to make himself worthy of such association.

Some regard is likewise to be paid to posterity. There are men of diligence and curiosity who treasure up the papers of the day merely because others neglect them, and in time they will be scarce. When these collections shall be read in another century, how will numberless contractions be reconciled? and how shall fame be possibly distributed among the taylor and boddice-makers of the present age?

Surely these things deserve consideration. It is enough for me to have hinted my desire that these abuses may be rectified; but such is the state of nature, that what all have the right of doing, many will attempt without sufficient care or due qualifications,

Nº XLI. SATURDAY, JANUARY 17.

THE following letter relates to an affliction perhaps not necessary to be imparted to the public; but I could not persuade myself to suppress it, be-

cause I think I know the sentiments to be sincere, and I feel no disposition to provide for this day any other entertainment.

*At tu quisquis eris, miseri qui cruda poeta
Credideris fletu funera digna tuo,
Hæc postrema tibi sit flendi causa, fluatque
Lenis inoffenso vitæque morisque gradu.*

MR. IDLER,

NOTwithstanding the warnings of philosophers; and the daily examples of losses and misfortunes which life forces upon our observation, such is the absorption of our thoughts in the business of the present day, such the resignation of our reason to empty hopes of future felicity, or such our unwillingness to foresee what we dread, that every calamity comes suddenly upon us, and not only presses us as a burden, but crushes as a blow.

There are evils which happen out of the common course of nature, against which it is no reproach not to be provided. A flash of lightening intercepts the traveller in his way. The concussion of an earthquake heaps the ruins of cities upon their inhabitants. But other miseries time brings, though silently yet visibly, forward by its even lapse, which yet approach us unseen, because we turn our eyes away, and seize us unresisted, because we could not arm ourselves against them, but by setting them before us.

That it is vain to shrink from what cannot be avoided, and to hide that from ourselves which must some time be found, is a truth which we all know, but which all neglect, and perhaps none more than the speculative reasoner, whose thoughts are always from home, whose eye wanders over life, whose fancy dances after meteors of happiness kindled by itself, and who examines every thing rather than his own state.

Nothing is more evident than that the decays of age must terminate in death; yet there is no man, says Tully, who does not believe that he may yet live another year; and there is none who does not, upon the same principle, hope another year for his parent or his friend: but the fallacy will be in time detected; the last year, the last day, must come. It has come and is past. The life which made my own life pleasant is at an end, and the gates of death are shut upon my prospects.

The loss of a friend upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wish and endeavour tended, is a state of dreary desolation in which the mind looks

abroad impatient of itself, and finds nothing but emptiness and horror. The blameless life, the artless tenderness, the pious simplicity, the modest resignation, the patient sickness, and the quiet death, are remembered only to add value to the loss, to aggravate regret for what cannot be amended, to deepen sorrow for what cannot be recalled.

These are the calamities by which Providence gradually disengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may repel, or hope may mitigate; but irreparable privation leaves nothing to exercise resolution or flatter expectation. The dead cannot return, and nothing is left us here but languishment and grief.

Yet such is the course of nature, that whoever lives long must outlive those whom he loves and honours. Such is the condition of our present existence, that life must one time lose its associations, and every inhabitant of the earth must walk downward to the grave alone and unregarded, without any partner of his joy or grief, without any interested witness of his misfortunes or successes.

Misfortune, indeed, he may yet feel; for where is the bottom of the misery of man? But what is success to him that has none to enjoy it? Happiness is not found in self-contemplation; it is perceived only when it is reflected from another.

We know little of the state of departed souls, because such knowledge is not necessary to a good life. Reason deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no further intelligence. Revelation is not wholly silent. *There is joy in the angels of Heaven over one sinner that repenteth*; and surely this joy is not incommunicable to souls disentangled from the body, and made like angels.

Let Hope therefore dictate, what Revelation does not contrive, that the union of souls may still remain; and that we who are struggling with sin, sorrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward.

These are the great occasions which force the mind to take refuge in Religion: when we have no help in ourselves, what can remain but that we look up to a higher and a greater Power? And to what

What hope may we not raise our eyes and hearts, when we consider that the Greatest Power is the best?

Surely there is no man who, thus assisted, does not seek success in the Gospel, which has brought *life and immortality to light*. The precepts of Epicurus, who teaches us to endure what the laws of the universe make necessary, may silence but not content us. The dictates of Zeno, who commands us to look with indifference on external things, may dispose us to conceal our

sorrow, but cannot assuage it. Real alleviation of the loss of friends, and rational tranquillity in the prospect of our own dissolution, can be received only from the promises of Him in whose hands are life and death, and from the assurance of another and better state, in which all tears will be wiped from the eyes, and the whole soul shall be filled with joy. Philosophy may infuse stubbornness, but Religion only can give patience.

I am, &c.

Nº XLII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 3.

THE subject of the following letter is not wholly unmentioned by the Rambler. The Spectator has also a letter containing a case not much different. I hope my correspondent's performance is more an effort of genius, than effusion of the passions; and that she hath rather attempted to paint some possible distress, than really feel the evils which she has described.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

THERE is a cause of misery, which though certainly known both to you and your predecessors, has been little taken notice of in your papers; I mean the snares that the bad behaviour of parents extends over the paths of life which their children are to tread after them; and as I make no doubt but the Idler holds the shield for virtue, as well as the glass for folly, that he will employ his leisure hours as much to his own satisfaction in warning his readers against a danger, as in laughing them out of a fashion: for this reason I am tempted to ask admittance for my story in your paper, though it has nothing to recommend it but truth, and the honest wish of warning others to shun the track which I am afraid may lead me at last to ruin.

I am the child of a father, who, having always lived in one spot in the country where he was born, and having had no genteel education himself, thought no qualifications in the world desirable but as they led up to fortune, and no learning necessary to happiness but such as might most effectually teach me to make the best market for myself. I was unfor-

tunately born a beauty, to a full sense of which my father took care to flatter me; and having, when very young, put me to a school in the country, afterwards transplanted me to another in town, at the instigation of his friends, where his ill-judged fondness let me remain no longer than to learn just enough experience to convince me of the fardiness of his views, to give me an idea of perfections which my present situation will never suffer me to reach, and to teach me sufficient morals to dare to despise what is bad, though it be in a father.

Thus equipped (as he thought completely) for life, I was carried back into the country, and lived with him and my mother in a small village, within a few miles of the county-town; where I mixed, at first with reluctance, among company which, though I never despised, I could not approve, as they were brought up with other inclinations, and narrower views than my own. My father took great pains to shew me every where, both at his own house, and at such public diversions as the country afforded: he frequently told the people all he had was for his daughter; took care to repeat the civilities I had received from all his friends in London; told how much I was admired, and all his little ambition could suggest to set me in a stronger light.

Thus have I continued tricked out for sale, as I may call it, and doomed, by parental authority, to a state little better than that of prostitution. I look on myself as growing cheaper every hour, and am losing all that honest pride, that modest confidence, in which the virgin

virgin dignity consists. Nor does my misfortune stop here: though many would be too generous to impute the follies of a father to a child whose heart has set her above them; yet I am afraid the most charitable of them will hardly think it possible for me to be a daily spectatrel of his vices without tacitly allowing them, and at last consenting to them, as the eye of the frightened infant is, by degrees, reconciled to the darkness of which at first it was afraid. It is a common opinion, he himself must very well know, that vices, like diseases, are often hereditary; and that the property of the one is to infect the manners, as the other poisons the springs of life.

Yet this, though bad, is not the worst: my father deceives himself in the hopes of the very child he has brought into the world; he suffers his house to be the seat of drunkenness, riot, and irreligion: who seduces, almost in my sight, the menial servant, converses with the prostitute, and corrupts the wife! Thus I, who from the earliest dawn of reason was taught to think that at my approach every eye sparkled with pleasure, or was dejected as conscious of superior charms, am excluded from society, through fear lest I should partake, if not of my father's crimes, at least of his reproach. Is a parent, who is so little solicitous for the welfare of a child, better than a pirate who turns a wretch adrift in a boat at sea without a star to steer by, or an anchor to hold it fast? Am I not to lay all my miseries at those doors which ought to have opened only for my protection? And if doomed to add at last one more to the number of those wretches whom neither the world nor it's law befriends, may I not justly

say that I have been awed by a parent into ruin? But though a parent's power is screened from insult and violation by the very words of Heaven, yet surely no laws, divine or human, forbid me to remove myself from the malignant shade of a plant that poisons all around it, blasts the bloom of youth, checks it's improvements, and makes all it's flowers fade. But to whom can the wretched, can the dependant fly? For me to fly a father's house, is to be a beggar: I have only one comforter amidst my anxieties, a pious relation, who bids me appeal to Heaven for a witness to my just intentions, fly as a deserted wretch to it's protection; and, being asked who my Father is, point, like the ancient philosopher, with my finger to the heavens.

The hope in which I write this, is, that you will give it a place in your paper; and as your essays sometimes find their way into the country, that my father may read my story there; and, if not for his own sake, yet for mine, spare to perpetuate that worst of calamities to me, the loss of character, from which all his dissimulation has not been able to rescue himself. Tell the world, Sir, that it is possible for virtue to keep it's throne unshaken without any other guard than itself; that it is possible to maintain that purity of thought so necessary to the completion of human excellence even in the midst of temptations; when they have no friend within, nor are assisted by the voluntary indulgence of vicious thoughts.

If the insertion of a story like this does not break in on the plan of your paper, you have it in your power to be a better friend than her father to

PERDITA.

Nº XLIII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10.

THE natural advantages which arise from the position of the earth which we inhabit with respect to the other planets, afford much employment to mathematical speculation, by which it has been discovered, that no other conformation of the system could have given such commodious distributions of light and heat, or imparted fertility and pleasure to so great a part of a revolving sphere.

It may perhaps be observed by the moralist, with equal reason, that our globe seems particularly fitted for the residence of a being, placed here only for a short time, whose task is to advance himself to a higher and happier state of existence, by unremitting vigilance of caution, and activity of virtue.

The duties required of man are such as human nature does not willingly perform, and such as those are inclined to delay

delay who yet intend some time to fulfil them. It was therefore necessary that this universal reluctance should be counteracted, and the drowsiness of hesitation wakened into resolve; that the danger of procrastination should be always in view, and the fallacies of security be hourly detected.

To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every side, reminds us of the lapse of time and the flux of life. The day and night succeed each other, the rotation of seasons diversifies the year, the sun rises, attains the meridian, declines and sets; and the moon every night changes it's form.

The day has been considered as an image of the year, and the year as the representation of life. The morning answers to the spring, and the spring to childhood and youth; the noon corresponds to the summer, and the summer to the strength of manhood. The evening is an emblem of autumn, and autumn of declining life. The night with it's silence and darkness shews the winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the winter points out the time when life shall cease, with it's hopes and pleasures.

He that is carried forward, however swiftly, by a motion equable and easy, perceives not the change of place but by the variation of objects. If the wheel of life, which rolls thus silently along, passed on through undistinguishable uniformity, we should never mark it's approaches to the end of the course. If one hour were like another; if the passage of the sun did not shew that the day is wasting; if the change of seasons did not impress upon us the flight of the year; quantities of duration equal to days and years would glide unobserved. If the parts of time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their departure or succession, but should live thoughtless of the past, and careless of the future, without will, and perhaps without power to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time

which is already lost with that which may properly remain.

But the course of time is so visibly marked, that it is observed even by the birds of passage, and by nations who have raised their minds very little above animal instinct: there are human beings, whose language does not supply them with words by which they can number five, but I have read of none that have not names for day and night, for summer and winter.

Yet it is certain that these admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with such accuracy the course of time, appear to have little sensibility of the decline of life. Every man has something to do which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer which he delays to combat.

So little do we accustom ourselves to consider the effects of time, that things necessary and certain often surprise us like unexpected contingencies. We leave the beauty in our bloom, and, after an absence of twenty years, wonder, at our return, to find her faded. We meet those whom we left children, and can scarcely persuade ourselves to treat them as men. The traveller visits in age those countries through which he rambled in his youth, and hopes for merriment at the old place. The man of business, wearied with unsatisfactory prosperity, retires to the town of his nativity, and expects to play away the last years with the companions of his childhood, and recover youth in the fields where he once was young.

From this inattention, so general and so mischievous, let it be every man's study to exempt himself. Let him that desires to see others happy, make haste to give while his gift can be enjoyed, and remember that every moment of delay takes away something from the value of his benefaction. And let him who purposes his own happiness, reflect, that while he forms his purpose the day rolls on, and *the night cometh when no man can work.*

N° XLIV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17.

MEMORY is among the faculties of the human mind, that of which we make the most frequent use,

or rather that of which the agency is incessant or perpetual. Memory is the primary and fundamental power, without

out which there could be no other intellectual operation. Judgment and ratiocination suppose something already known, and draw their decisions only from experience. Imagination selects ideas from the treasures of remembrance, and produces novelty only by varied combinations. We do not even form conjectures of distant, or anticipations of future events, but by concluding what is possible from what is past.

The two offices of Memory are collection and distribution; by one images are accumulated, and by the other produced for use. Collection is always the employment of our first years, and distribution commonly that of our advanced age.

To collect and reposit the various forms of things, is far the most pleasing part of mental occupation. We are naturally delighted with novelty, and there is a time when all that we see is new. When first we enter into the world, whithersoever we turn our eyes, they meet Knowledge with Pleasure at her side; every diversity of nature pours ideas in upon the soul; neither search nor labour are necessary; we have nothing more to do than to open our eyes, and curiosity is gratified.

Much of the pleasure which the first survey of the world affords, is exhausted before we are conscious of our own felicity, or able to compare our condition with some other possible state. We have therefore few traces of the joy of our earliest discoveries; yet we all remember a time when nature had so many untasted gratifications, that every excursion gave delight which can now be found no longer, when the noise of a torrent, the rustle of a wood, the song of birds, or the play of lambs, had power to fill the attention, and suspend all perception of the course of time.

But these easy pleasures are soon at an end; we have seen in a very little time so much, that we call out for new objects of observation, and endeavour to find variety in books and life. But study is laborious, and not always satisfactory; and conversation has its pains as well as pleasures; we are willing to learn, but not willing to be taught; we are pained by ignorance, but pained yet more by another's knowledge.

From the vexation of pupillage men commonly set themselves free about

the middle of life, by shutting up the avenues of intelligence, and resolving to rest in their present state; and they, whose ardour of enquiry continues longer, find themselves insensibly forsaken by their instructors. As every man advances in life, the proportion between those that are younger, and that are older than himself, is continually changing; and he that has lived half a century, finds few that do not require from him that information which he once expected from those that went before him.

Then it is that the magazines of Memory are opened, and the stores of accumulated knowledge are displayed by vanity or benevolence, or in honest commerce of mutual interest. Every man wants others, and is therefore glad when he is wanted by them. And as few men will endure the labour of intense meditation without necessity, he that has learned enough for his profit or his honour, seldom endeavours after further acquisitions.

The pleasure of recollecting speculative notions would not be much less than that of gaining them, if they could be kept pure and unmingled with the passages of life; but such is the necessary concatenation of our thoughts, that good and evil are linked together, and no pleasure recurs but associated with pain. Every revived idea reminds us of a time when something was enjoyed that is now lost, when some hope was not yet blasted, when some purpose had not yet languished into sluggishness or indifference.

Whether it be that life has more vexations than comforts, or, what is in the event just the same, that evil makes deeper impression than good, it is certain that few can review the time past without heaviness of heart. He remembers many calamities incurred by folly, many opportunities lost by negligence. The shades of the dead rise up before him; and he laments the companions of his youth, the partners of his amusements, the assistants of his labours, whom the hand of death has snatched away.

When an offer was made to Themistocles of teaching him the art of Memory, he answered, that he would rather wish for the art of Forgetfulness. He felt his imagination haunted by phantoms of misery which he was unable

able to suppress, and would gladly have calmed his thoughts with some *oblivious* antidote. In this we all resemble one another; the hero and the sage are, like

vulgar mortals, overburthened by the weight of life, all shrink from recollection, and all wish for an art of forgetfulness.

Nº XLV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24.

THERE is in many minds a kind of vanity exerted to the disadvantage of themselves; a desire to be praised for superior acuteness, discovered only in the degradation of their species, or censure of their country.

Defamation is sufficiently copious. The general lampooner of mankind may find long exercise for his zeal or wit in the defects of nature, the vexations of life, the follies of opinion, and the corruptions of practice. But fiction is easier than discernment; and most of these writers spare themselves the labour of enquiry, and exhaust their virulence upon imaginary crimes, which, as they never existed, can never be amended.

That the painters find no encouragement among the English for many other works than portraits, has been imputed to national selfishness. 'Tis vain,' says the satyrist, 'to set before any Englishman the scenes of landscape, or the heroes of history; nature and antiquity are nothing in his eye; he has no value but for himself, nor desires any copy but of his own form.'

Whoever is delighted with his own picture must derive his pleasure from the pleasure of another. Every man is always present to himself, and has, therefore, little need of his own resemblance, nor can desire it, but for the sake of those whom he loves, and by whom he hopes to be remembered. This use of the art is a natural and reasonable consequence of affection; and though, like other human actions, it is often complicated with pride, yet even such pride is more laudable, than that by which palaces are covered with pictures, that, however excellent, neither imply the owner's virtue nor excite it.

Genius is chiefly exerted in historical pictures, and the art of the painter of portraits is often lost in the obscurity of his subject. But it is in painting as in life; what is greatest is not always best. I should grieve to see Reynolds transfer to heroes and to goddesses, to empty splendor and to airy fiction, that art

which is now employed in diffusing friendship, in reviving tenderness, in quickening the affections of the absent, and continuing the presence of the dead.

Yet in a nation great and opulent there is room, and ought to be patronage, for an art like that of painting through all its diversities; and it is to be wished, that the reward now offered for an historical picture may excite an honest emulation, and give beginning to an English school.

It is not very easy to find an action or event that can be efficaciously represented by a painter.

He must have an action not successive but instantaneous; for the time of a picture is a single moment. For this reason, the death of Hercules cannot well be painted, though at the first view it flatters the imagination with very glittering ideas: the gloomy mountain, over-hanging the sea, and covered with trees, some bending to the wind, and some torn from their roots by the raging hero; the violence with which he rends from his shoulders the envenomed garment; the propriety with which his muscular nakedness may be displayed; the death of Lycas whirled from the promontory; the gigantic presence of Philoctetes; the blaze of the fatal pile, which the deities behold with grief and terror from the sky.

All these images fill the mind, but will not compose a picture, because they cannot be united in a single moment. Hercules must have rent his flesh at one time, and tossed Lycas into the air at another; he must first tear up the trees, and then lie down upon the pile.

The action must be circumstantial and distinct. There is a passage in the Iliad which cannot be read without strong emotions. A Trojan prince, seized by Achilles in the battle, falls at his feet, and in moving terms supplicates for life. 'How can a wretch like thee,' says the haughty Greek, 'entreat to live, when thou knowest that the time must come when Achilles is

'to die?' This cannot be painted, because no peculiarity of attitude or disposition can so supply the place of language as to impress the sentiment.

The event painted must be such as excites passion, and different passions in the several actors, or a tumult of contending passions in the chief.

Perhaps the discovery of Ulysses by his nurse is of this kind. The surprise of the nurse mingled with joy; that of Ulysses checked by prudence, and clouded by solicitude; and the distinctness of the action by which the scar is found; all concur to complete the subject. But the pictures, having only two figures, will want variety.

A much nobler assemblage may be furnished by the death of Epaminondas. The mixture of gladness and grief in the face of the messenger who brings his dying general an account of the victory; the various passions of the attendants; the sublimity of composure in the hero, while the dart is by his own command drawn from his side, and the faint gleam of satisfaction that diffuses itself over

the languor of death; are worthy of that pencil which yet I do not wish to see employed upon them.

If the design were not too multifarious and extensive, I should wish that our painters would attempt the dissolution of the parliament by Cromwell. The point of time may be chosen when Cromwell, looking round the Pandæmonium with contempt, ordered the bauble to be taken away; and Harrison laid hands on the speaker to drag him from the chair.

The various appearances, which rage, and terror, and astonishment, and guilt, might exhibit in the faces of that hateful assembly, of whom the principal persons may be faithfully drawn from portraits or prints; the irrelative repugnance of some, the hypocritical submissions of others, the ferocious intolence of Cromwell, the rugged brutality of Harrison, and the general trepidation of fear and wickedness, would, if some proper disposition could be contrived, make a picture of unexampled variety, and irresistible instruction.

N° XLVI. SATURDAY, MARCH 3.

MR. IDLER,

I Am encouraged, by the notice you have taken of Betty Broom, to represent the miseries which I suffer from a species of tyranny which, I believe, is not very uncommon, though perhaps it may have escaped the observation of those who converse little with fine ladies, or see them only in their publick characters.

To this method of venting my vexation I am the more inclined, because if I do not complain to you, I must burst in silence; for my mistress has teased me and teased me till I can hold no longer, and yet I must not tell her of her tricks. The girls that live in common services can quarrel, and give warning, and find other places; but we that live with great ladies, if we once offend them, have nothing left but to return into the country.

I am waiting maid to a lady who keeps the best company, and is seen at every place of fashionable resort. I am envied by all the maids in the square, for few countesses leave off so many cloaths as my mistress, and nobody

shares with me; so that I supply two families in the country with finery for the assizes and horse-races, besides what I wear myself. The steward and house-keeper have joined against me to procure my removal, that they may advance a relation of their own; but their designs are found out by my lady, who says I need not fear them, for she will never have Dowdies about her.

You would think, Mr. Idler, like others, that I am very happy, and may well be contented with my lot. But I will tell you. My lady has an odd humour. She never orders any thing in direct words, for she loves a sharp girl that can take a hint.

I would not have you suspect that she has any thing to hint which she is ashamed to speak at length, for none can have greater purity of sentiment or rectitude of intention. She has nothing to hide, yet nothing will she tell. She always gives her directions obliquely and allusively, by the mention of something relative or consequential, without any other purpose than to exercise my acuteness and her own.

It

It is impossible to give a notion of this style otherwise than by examples. One night, when she had set writing letters till it was time to be dressed—'Molly,' said she, 'the ladies are all to be at court to-night in white aprons.' When she means that I should fend to order the chair, she says—'I think the streets are clean, I may venture to walk.' When she would have something put into it's place, she bids me lay it on the floor. If she would have me snuff the candles, she asks whether I think her eyes are like a cat's? If she thinks her chocolate delayed, she talks of the benefit of abstinence. If any needle-work is forgotten, she supposes that I have heard of the lady who died by pricking her finger.

She always imagines that I can recall every thing past from a single word. If she wants her head from the mill ner, she only says—'Molly, you know Mrs. Tape's.' If she would have the mantua-maker sent for, she remarks that Mr. Taffety, the mercer, was here last week. She ordered, a fortnight ago, that the first time she was abroad all day I should chuse her a new set of coffee-cups at the china-shop: of this she reminded me yesterday, as she was going down stairs, by saying,—'You can't find your way now to Pall-Mall.'

All this would never vex me, if, by encreasing my trouble, she spared her own; but, dear Mr. Idler, is it not as easy to say *coffee-cups at Pall-Mall*, and to tell me in plain words what I am to do, and when it is to be done, as to torment her own head with the labour of finding hints, and mine with that of understanding them?

When first I came to this lady, I had nothing like the learning that I have now; for she has many books, and I have much time to read, so that of late I seldom have missed her meaning: but when the first took me, I was an ignorant girl; and she, who, as is very common, confounded want of knowledge with want of understanding, began once to despair of bringing me to any thing, because, when I came into her chamber

at the call of her bell, she asked me, *Whether we lived in Zembla*, and I did not guess the meaning of her enquiry; but modestly answered, that I could not tell. She had happened to ring once when I did not hear her, and meant to put me in mind of that country, where founts are said to be congealed by the frost.

Another time, as I was dressing her head, she began to talk on a sudden of *Medusa*, and *Snakes*, and *men turned into stone*, and *maids*, that if they were not watched, would let their mistresses be *Gorgons*. I looked round me half frightened, and quite bewildered; till at last, finding that her literature was thrown away upon me, she bid me, with great vehemence, reach the curling-irons.

It is not without some indignation, Mr. Idler, that I discover, in these artifices of vexation, something worse than foppery or caprice; a mean delight in superiority, which knows itself in no danger of reproof or opposition; a cruel pleasure in seeing the perplexity of a mind obliged to find what is studiously concealed, and a mean indulgence of petty malevolence, in the sharp censure of involuntary, and very often of inevitable, failings. When, beyond her expectation, I hit upon her meaning, I can perceive a sudden cloud of disappointment spread over her face, and have sometimes been afraid lest I should lose her favour by understanding her when she means to puzzle me.

This day, however, she has conquered my sagacity. When she went out of her dressing-room, she said nothing, but, *Molly, you know*, and hastened to her chariot. What I am to know is yet a secret; but if I do not know, before she comes back, what I yet have no means of discovering, she will make my dullness a pretence for a fortnight's ill humour, treat me as a creature devoid of the faculties necessary to the common duties of life, and perhaps give the next gown to the housekeeper. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

MOLLY QUICK.

N^o XLVII. SATURDAY, MARCH 10.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

I Am the unfortunate wife of a City Wit, and cannot but think that my case may deserve equal compassion with any of those which have been represented in your paper.

I married my husband within three months after the expiration of his apprenticeship; we put our money together, and furnished a large and splendid shop, in which he was for five years and a half diligent and civil. The notice which curiosity or kindness commonly bestows on beginners, was continued by confidence and esteem; one customer, pleased with his treatment and his bargain, recommended another, and we were busy behind the counter from morning to night.

Thus every day increased our wealth and our reputation. My husband was often invited to dinner openly on the Exchange by hundred thousand pounds men; and whenever I went to any of the halls, the wives of the aldermen made me low courtesies. We always took up our notes before the day, and made all considerable payments by draughts upon our banker.

You will easily believe that I was well enough pleased with my condition; for what happiness can be greater than that of growing every day richer and richer? I will not deny, that, imagining myself likely to be in a short time the sheriff's lady, I broke off my acquaintance with some of my neighbours, and advised my husband to keep good company, and not to be seen with men that were worth nothing.

In time he found that ale disagreed with his constitution, and went every night to drink his pint at a tavern, where he met with a set of criticks, who disputed upon the merit of the different theatrical performers. By these idle fellows he was taken to the play, which at first he did not seem much to heed; for he owned that he very seldom knew what they were doing, and that, while his companions would let him alone, he was commonly thinking on his last bargain.

Having once gone, however, he went

again and again, though I often told him that three shillings were thrown away; at last he grew uneasy if he missed a night, and importuned me to go with him. I went to a tragedy which they called Macbeth; and, when I came home, told him, that I could not bear to see men and women make themselves such fools, by pretending to be witches and ghosts, generals and kings, and to walk in their sleep when they were as much awake as those that looked at them. He told me that I must get higher notions, and that a play was the most rational of all entertainments, and most proper to relax the mind after the business of the day.

By degrees he gained knowledge of some of the players; and, when the play was over, very frequently treated them with suppers, for which he was admitted to stand behind the scenes.

He soon began to lose some of his morning hours in the same folly, and was for one winter very diligent in his attendance on the rehearsals; but of this species of idleness he grew weary, and said, that the play was nothing without the company.

His ardour for the diversion of the evening increased; he bought a sword, and paid five shillings a night to sit in the boxes; he went sometimes into a place which he calls the Green-room, where all the wits of the age assemble; and when he had been there, could do nothing, for two or three days, but repeat their jests, or tell their disputes.

He has now lost his regard for every thing but the play-house; he invites, three times a week, one or other to drink claret, and talk of the drama. His first care in the morning is to read the play-bills; and if he remembers any lines of the tragedy which is to be represented, walks about the shop, repeating them so loud, and with such strange gestures, that the passengers gather round the door.

His greatest pleasure, when I married him, was to hear the situation of his shop commended, and to be told how many estates have been got in it by the same trade; but of late he grows peevish at any mention of business, and delights

in nothing so much as to be told that he speaks like Mollap.

Among his new associates, he has learned another language, and speaks in such a strain, that his neighbours cannot understand him. If a customer talks longer than he is willing to hear, he will complain that he has been excruciated with unmeaning verbosity; he laughs at the letters of his friends for their tameness of expression, and often declares himself weary of attending to the minutiae of a shop.

It is well for me that I know how to keep a book, for of late he is scarcely ever in the way. Since one of his friends told him that he had a genius for tragic poetry, he has locked himself in an upper room six or seven hours a day, and when I carry him any paper to be read or signed, I hear him talking vehemently to himself, sometimes of love and beauty, sometimes of friendship and virtue, but more frequently of liberty and his country.

I would gladly, Mr. Idler, be informed what to think of a shopkeeper, who is incessantly talking about liberty; a word, which, since his acquaintance with polite life, my husband has always in his mouth; he is, on all occasions, afraid of our liberty, and declares his resolution to hazard all for liberty. What can the man mean? I am sure he has liberty enough; it were better for him and me if his liberty was lessened.

He has a friend whom he calls a Critick, that comes twice a week to read what he is writing. This critick tells him that his piece is a little irregular, but that some detached scenes will shine prodigiously, and that in the character of Bombulus he is wonderfully great. My scribbler then squeezes his hand, calls him the best of friends, thanks him for his sincerity, and tells him that he hates to be flattered. I have reason to believe that he seldom parts with his dear friend without lending him two guineas, and am afraid that he gave bail for him three days ago.

By this course of life our credit as traders is lessened; and I cannot forbear to suspect, that my husband's honour as a wit is not much advanced, for he seems to be always the lowest of the company, and is afraid to tell his opinion till the rest have spoken. When he was behind his counter, he used to be brisk, active, and jocular, like a man that knew what he was doing, and did not fear to look another in the face; but among wits and criticks he is timorous and awkward, and hangs down his head at his own table. Dear Mr. Idler, persuade him, if you can, to return once more to his native element. Tell him that wit will never make him rich, but that there are places where riches will always make a wit.

I am, Sir, &c.

DEBORAH GINGER.

Nº XLVIII. SATURDAY, MARCH 17.

THERE is no kind of idleness, by which we are so easily seduced, as that which dignifies itself by the appearance of business, and by making the loiterer imagine that he has something to do which must not be neglected, keeps him in perpetual agitation, and hurries him rapidly from place to place.

He that sits still, or reposes himself upon a couch, no more deceives himself than he deceives others; he knows that he is doing nothing, and has no other solace of his insignificance than the resolution, which the lazy hourly make, of changing his mode of life.

To do nothing, every man is ashamed; and to do much, almost every man is unwilling or afraid. Innumerable expe-

dients have therefore been invented to produce motion without labour, and employment without solicitude. The greater part of those whom the kindness of Fortune has left to their own direction, and whom Want does not keep chained to the counter or the plow, play throughout life with the shadows of business, and know not at last what they have been doing.

These imitators of action are of all denominations. Some are seen at every auction without intention to purchase; others appear punctually at the Exchange, though they are known there only by their faces. Some are always making parties, to visit collections for which they have no taste, and some neglect

est every pleasure and every duty to hear questions, in which they have no interest, debated in parliament.

These men never appear more ridiculous, than in the distress which they imagine themselves to feel, from some accidental interruption of those empty pursuits. A tiger newly imprisoned is indeed more formidable, but not more angry, than Jack-Tulip with-held from a florist's feast, or Tom Diffich hindered from seeing the first representation of a play.

As poetical affairs are the highest and most extensive of temporal concerns, the mimick of a politician is more busy and important than any other trifter. Monsieur le Noir, a man who, without property or importance in any corner of the earth, has, in the present confusion of the world, declared himself a steady adherent to the French, is made miserable by a wind that keeps back the packet-boat, and still more miserable by every account of a Malouin privateer caught in his cruise: he knows well that nothing can be done or said by him which can produce any effect but that of laughter, that he can neither hasten nor retard good or evil, that his joys or sorrows have scarcely any partakers; yet such is his zeal, and such his curiosity, that he would run barefooted to Gravesend, for the sake of knowing first that the English had lost a tender, and would ride out to meet every mail from the Continent if he might be permitted to open it.

Learning is generally confessed to be desirable, and there are some who fancy

themselves always busy in acquiring it. Of these ambulatory students, one of the most busy is my friend Tom Restless.

Tom has long had a mind to be a man of knowledge, but he does not care to spend much time among authors; for he is of opinion that few books deserve the labour of perusal, that they give the mind an unfashionable cast, and destroy that freedom of thought and easiness of manners indispensably requisite to acceptance in the world. Tom has therefore found another way to wisdom. When he rises he goes into a coffee-house, where he creeps so near to men whom he takes to be reasoners as to hear their discourse, and endeavours to remember something which, when it has been strained through Tom's head, is so near to nothing, that what it once was cannot be discovered. This he carries round from friend to friend through a circle of visits, till hearing what he says upon the question, he becomes able at dinner to say a little himself; and as every great genius relaxes himself among his inferiors, meets with some who wonder how so young a man can talk so wisely.

At night he has a new feast prepared for his intellects; he always runs to a disputing society, or a speaking club, where he half hears what, if he had heard the whole, he would but half understand; goes home pleased with the consciousness of a day well spent, lies down full of ideas, and rises in the morning empty as before.

Nº XLIX. SATURDAY, MARCH 24.

I Supped three nights ago with my friend Will Marvel. His affairs obliged him lately to take a journey into Devonshire, from which he has just returned. He knows me to be a very patient hearer, and was glad of my company, as it gave him an opportunity of disburthening himself by a minute relation of the casualties of his expedition.

Will is not one of those who go out and return with nothing to tell. He has a story of his travels, which will strike a home-bred citizen with horror, and has in ten days suffered so often the extremes of terror and joy, that he is in doubt whether he shall ever again ex-

pose either his body or his mind to such danger and fatigue.

When he left London the morning was bright, and a fair day was promised. But Will is born to struggle with difficulties. That happened to him, which has sometimes, perhaps, happened to others. Before he had going more than ten miles, it began to rain. What course was to be taken! His soul disdained to turn back. He did what the King of Prussia might have done; he flapped his hat, buttoned up his cape, and went forwards, fortifying his mind by the stoical consolation, that whatever is violent will be short.

His constancy was not long tried ; at the distance of about half a mile he saw an inn, which he entered wet and weary, and found civil treatment and proper refreshment. After a respite of about two hours he looked abroad, and seeing the sky clear, called for his horse, and passed the first stage without any other memorable accident.

Will considered that labour must be relieved by pleasure, and that the strength which great undertakings require must be maintained by copious nutriment ; he therefore ordered himself an elegant supper, drank two bottles of claret, and passed the beginning of the night in sound sleep ; but waking before light, was forewarned of the troubles of the next day, by a shower beating against his windows with such violence as to threaten the dissolution of nature. When he arose, he found what he expected, that the country was under water. He joined himself, however, to a company that was travelling the same way, and came safely to the place of dinner, though every step of his horse dashed the mud into the air.

In the afternoon, having parted from his company, he set forward alone, and passed many collections of water of which it was impossible to guess the depth, and which he now cannot review without some censure of his own rashness ; but what a man undertakes he must perform, and Marvel hates a coward at his heart.

Few that lie warm in their beds, think what others undergo, who have perhaps been as tenderly educated, and have as acute sensations as themselves. My friend was now to lodge the second night almost fifty miles from home, in a house which he never had seen before, among people to whom he was totally a stranger, not knowing whether the next man he should meet would prove good or bad ; but seeing an inn of a good appearance, he rode resolutely into the yard ; and knowing that respect is often paid in proportion as it is claimed, delivered his injunction to the hostler with spirit, and, entering the house, called vigorously about him.

On the third day up rose the sun and Mr. Marvel. His troubles and his dangers were now such as he wishes no other man ever to encounter. The ways were less frequented, and the country more thinly inhabited. He rode many

a lonely hour through mire and water, and met not a single soul for two miles together with whom he could exchange a word. He cannot deny that, looking round upon the dreary region, and seeing nothing but bleak fields and naked trees, hills obscured by fogs, and flats covered with inundations, he did for some time suffer melancholy to prevail upon him, and wished himself again safe at home. One comfort he had, which was to consider that none of his friends were in the same distress, for whom, if they had been with him, he should have suffered more than for himself ; he could not forbear sometimes to consider how happily the Idler is settled in an easier condition, who, surrounded like him with terrors, could have done nothing but lie down and die.

Amidst these reflections he came to a town and found a dinner, which disposed him to more cheerful sentiments : but the joys of life are short, and it's miseries are long ; he mounted and travelled fifteen miles more through dirt and desolation.

At last the sun set, and all the horrors of darkness came upon him. He then repented the weak indulgence in which he had gratified himself at noon with too long an interval of rest ; yet he went forward along a path which he could no longer see, sometimes rushing suddenly into water, and sometimes incumbered with stiff clay, ignorant whither he was going, and uncertain whether his next step might not be the last.

In this dismal gloom of nocturnal peregrination his horse unexpectedly stood still. Marvel had heard many relations of the instinct of horses, and was in doubt what danger might be at hand. Sometimes he fancied that he was on the bank of a river still and deep, and sometimes that a dead body lay across the track. He sat still awhile to recollect his thoughts ; and as he was about to alight and explore the darkness, out stepped a man with a lantern, and opened the turnpike. He hired a guide to the town, arrived in safety, and slept in quiet.

The rest of his journey was nothing but danger. He climbed and descended precipices on which vulgar mortals tremble to look ; he passed marshes like the Serbonian bog, where armies whole have sunk ; he forded rivers where the current roared like the Egre of the Se-

vern; or ventured himself on bridges that trembled under him; from which he looked down on foaming whirlpools, or dreadful abysses; he wandered over houseless heaths, amidst all the rages of the elements, with the snow driving in his face, and the tempest howling in his ears.

Such are the colours in which Marvel paints his adventures. He has accustomed himself to founding words and hyperbolical images, till he has lost the

power of true description. In a room through which the heaviest carriages pass without difficulty, and the post-boy every day and night goes and returns, he meets with hardships like those which are endured in Siberian deserts, and misses nothing of romantic danger but a giant and a dragon. When his dreadful story is told in proper terms, it is only that the way was dirty in winter, and that he experienced the common vicissitudes of rain and sunshine.

N^O. L. SATURDAY, MARCH 31.

THE character of Mr. Marvel has raised the merriment of some and the contempt of others who do not sufficiently consider how often they hear and practise the same arts of exaggerated narration.

There is not, perhaps, among the multitudes of all conditions that swarm upon the earth, a single man who does not believe that he has something extraordinary to relate of himself; and who does not at one time or other, summon the attention of his friends to the casualties of his adventures and the vicissitudes of his fortune; casualties and vicissitudes that happen alike in lives uniform and diversified; to the commander of armies, and the writer at a desk; to the sailor who resigns himself to the wind and water, and the farmer whose longest journey is to the market.

In the present state of the world man may pass through Shakespeare's seven stages of life, and meet nothing singular or wonderful. But such is every man's attention to himself, that what is common and unheeded when it is only seen, becomes remarkable and peculiar when we happen to feel it.

It is well enough known to be according to the usual process of nature, that men should sicken and recover, that some designs should succeed and others miscarry, that friends should be separated and meet again, that some should be made angry by endeavours to please them, and some be pleased when no care has been used to gain their approbation; that men and women should at first come together by chance, like each other so well as to commence acquaintance, improve acquaintance into fondness, increase or extinguish fondness by mar-

riage, and have children of different degrees of intellects and virtue, some of whom die before their parents, and others survive them.

Yet let any man tell his own story, and nothing of all this has ever befallen him according to the common order of things; something has always discriminated his case; some unusual concurrence of events has appeared which made him more happy or more miserable than other mortals; for in pleasures or calamities, however common, every one has comforts and afflictions of his own.

It is certain that without some artificial augmentations, many of the pleasures of life, and almost all its embellishments, would fall to the ground. If no man was to express more delight than he felt, those who felt most would raise little envy. If travellers were to describe the most laboured performances of art with the same coldness as they survey them, all expectations of happiness from change of place would cease. The pictures of Raphael would hang without spectators, and the gardens of Versailles might be inhabited by hermits. All the pleasure that is received ends in an opportunity of splendid falsehood, in the power of gaining notice by the display of beauties which the eye was weary of beholding, and a history of happy moments, of which, in reality, the most happy was the last.

The ambition of superior sensibility and superior eloquence disposes the lovers of arts to receive rapture at onetime, and communicate it at another; and each labours first to impose upon himself, and then to propagate the imposture.

Pain is less subject than pleasure to caprices of expression. The torments of disease,

disease, and the grief of irremediable misfortunes, sometimes are such as no words can declare, and can only be signified by groans, or sobs, or inarticulate ejaculations. Man has from nature a mode of utterance peculiar to pain, but he has none peculiar to pleasure, because he never has pleasure but in such degrees as the ordinary use of language may equal or surpass.

It is nevertheless certain, that many pains as well as pleasures are heightened by rhetorical affectation, and that the pleasure is, for the most part, bigger than the life.

When we describe our sensations of another's sorrows, either in friendly or ceremonious condolence, the customs of the world scarcely admit of rigid veracity. Perhaps the fondest friendship would enrage oftener than comfort, were the tongue on such occasions faith-

fully to represent the sentiments of the heart; and I think the strictest moralists allow forms of address to be used without much regard to their literal acceptance, when either respect or tenderness requires them, because they are universally known to denote not the degree but the species of our sentiments.

But the same indulgence cannot be allowed to him who aggravates dangers incurred or sorrow endured by himself, because he darkens the prospect of futurity, and multiplies the pains of our condition by useless terror. Those who magnify their delights are less criminal deceivers, yet they raise hopes which are sure to be disappointed. It would be undoubtedly best, if we could see and hear every thing as it is, that nothing might be too anxiously dreaded, or too ardently pursued.

Nº LL. SATURDAY, APRIL 7.

IT has been commonly remarked, that eminent men are least eminent at home, that bright characters lose much of their splendor at a nearer view, and many who fill the world with their fame, excite very little reverence among those that surround them in their domestic privacies.

To blame or to suspect is easy and natural. When the fact is evident, and the cause doubtful, some accusation is always engendered between idleness and malignity. This disparity of general and familiar esteem is therefore imputed to hidden vices, and to practices indulged in secret, but carefully covered from the publick eye.

Vice will indeed always produce contempt. The dignity of Alexander, tho' nations fell prostrate before him, was certainly held in little veneration by the partakers of his midnight revels, who had seen him, in the madness of wine, murder his friend, or set fire to the Persian palace at the instigation of a harlot; and it is well remembered among us, that the avarice of Marlborough kept him in subjection to his wife, while he was dreaded by France as her conqueror, and honoured by the Emperor as his deliverer.

But though, where there is vice, there must be want of reverence, it is not re-

ciprocally true, that when there is want of reverence there is always vice. That awe which great actions or abilities impress will be inevitably diminished by acquaintance, though nothing either mean or criminal should be found.

Of men, as of every thing else, we must judge according to our knowledge. When we see of a hero only his battles, or of a writer only his books, we have nothing to allay our ideas of their greatness. We consider the one only as the guardian of his country, and the other only as the instructor of mankind. We have neither opportunity nor motive to examine the minuter parts of their lives, or the less apparent peculiarities of their characters; we name them with habitual respect, and forget, what we still continue to know, that they are men like other mortals.

But such is the constitution of the world, that much of life must be spent in the same manner by the wise and the ignorant, the exalted and the low. Men, however distinguished by external accidents or intrinsic qualities, have all the same wants, the same pains, and, as far as the senses are consulted, the same pleasures. The petty cares and petty duties are the same in every station to every understanding, and every hour brings some occasion on which we all

sink to the common level. We are all naked till we are dressed, and hungry till we are fed; and the general's triumph, and the sage's disputation, end, like the humble labours of the smith or plowman, in a dinner or in sleep.

Those notions which are to be collected by reason in opposition to the senses, will seldom stand forward in the mind, but lie treasured in the remoter repositories of memory, to be found only when they are sought. Whatever any man may have written or done, his precepts or his valour will scarcely overbalance the unimportant uniformity which runs through his time. We do not easily consider him as great, whom our own eyes shew us to be little; nor labour to keep present to our thoughts the latent excellencies of him who shares with us all our weaknesses and many of our follies; who like us is delighted with slight amusements, busied with trifling employments, and disturbed by little vexations.

Great powers cannot be exerted, but when great exigencies make them necessary. Great exigencies can happen but seldom, and therefore those qualities which have a claim to the veneration of mankind, lie hid, for the most part, like subterranean treasures, over which the foot passes as on common ground, till necessity breaks open the golden cavern.

In the ancient celebrations of victory, a slave was placed on the triumphal car, by the side of the general, who reminded him by a short sentence, that he was a man. Whatever danger there might be left a leader, in his passage to the Capitol, should forget the frailties of his nature, there was surely no need of such an admonition; the intoxication could not have continued long; he would have been at home but a few hours before some of his dependants would have forgot his greatness, and shewn him, that notwithstanding his laurels he was yet a man.

There are some who try to escape this domestic degradation, by labouring to appear always wise or always great; but he that strives against nature, will for ever strive in vain. To be grave of mien and slow of utterance; to look with solicitude and speak with hesitation, is attainable at will; but the shew of wisdom is ridiculous when there is nothing to cause doubt, as that of valour where there is nothing to be feared.

A man who has duly considered the condition of his being, will contentedly yield to the course of things; he will not pant for distinction where distinction would imply no merit; but though on great occasions he may wish to be greater than others, he will be satisfied in common occurrences not to be less.

Nº LII. SATURDAY, APRIL 14.

RESPONSARIE CUPIDINIBUS.

HOR.

THE practice of self-denial, or the forbearance of lawful pleasure, has been considered by almost every nation, from the remotest ages, as the highest exaltation of human virtue; and all have agreed to pay respect and veneration to those who abstained from the delights of life, even when they did not censure those who enjoyed them.

The general voice of mankind, civil and barbarous, confesses that the mind and body are at variance, and that neither can be made happy by its proper gratifications, but at the expence of the other; that a pampered body will darken the mind, and an enlightened mind will macerate the body. And none have failed to confer their esteem

on those who prefer intellect to sense, who controul their lower by their higher faculties, and forget the wants and desires of animal life for rational disquisitions of pious contemplations.

The earth has scarce a country so far advanced towards political regularity as to divide the inhabitants into classes, where some orders of men or women are not distinguished by voluntary severities, and where the reputation of their sanctity is not increased in proportion to the rigour of their rules, and the exactness of their performance.

When an opinion to which there is no temptation of interest spreads wide and continues long, it may be reasonably presumed to have been infused by nature

ture or dictated by reason. It has been often observed that the fictions of imposture, and illusions of fancy, soon give way to time and experience; and that nothing keeps its ground but truth, which gains every day new influence by new confirmation.

But truth, when it is reduced to practice, easily becomes subject to caprice and imagination; and many particular acts will be wrong, though their general principle be right. It cannot be denied that a just conviction of the restraint necessary to be laid upon the appetites has produced extravagant and unnatural modes of mortification, and institutions which, however favourably considered, will be found to violate nature without promoting piety.

But the doctrine of self-denial is not weakened in itself by the errors of those who misinterpret or misapply it; the encroachment of the appetites upon the understanding is hourly perceived, and the state of those whom sensuality has enslaved, is known to be in the highest degree despicable and wretched.

The dread of such shameful captivity may justly raise alarms, and wisdom will endeavour to keep danger at a distance. By timely caution and suspicious vigilance those desires may be repressed, to which indulgence would soon give absolute dominion; those enemies may be overcome, which, when they have been a while accustomed to victory, can no longer be resisted.

Nothing is more fatal to happiness or virtue, than that confidence which flatters us with an opinion of our own strength, and by assuring us of the power of retreat precipitates us into hazard. Some may safely venture further than others into the regions of delight, lay themselves more open to the golden shafts of pleasure, and advance nearer to the residence of the Syrens; but he that is best armed with constancy and reason is yet vulnerable in one part or

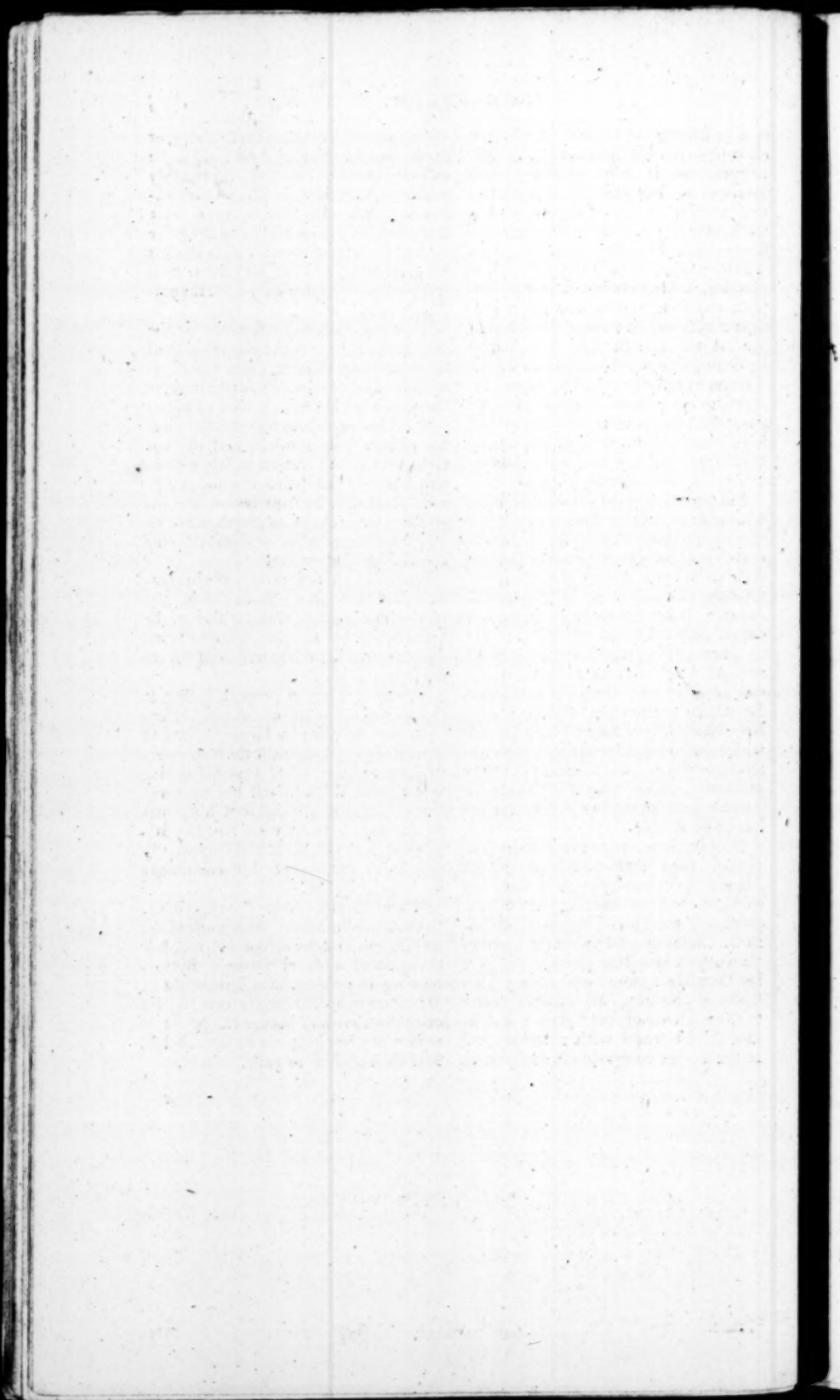
other; and to every man there is a point fixed, beyond which, if he passes, he will not easily return. It is certainly most wise, as it is most safe, to stop before he touches the utmost limit, since every step of advance will more and more entice him to go forward, till he shall at last enter the recesses of voluptuousness, and sloth and despondency close the passage behind him.

To deny early and inflexibly, is the only art of checking the importunity of desire, and of preserving quiet and innocence. Innocent gratifications must be sometimes withheld; he that complies with all lawful desires will certainly lose his empire over himself, and in time either submit his reason to his wishes, and think all his desires lawful, or dismiss his reason as troublesome and intrusive, and resolve to snatch what he may happen to wish, without enquiry about right and wrong.

No man, whose appetites are his masters, can perform the duties of his nature with strictness and regularity; he that would be superior to external influences must first become superior to his own passions.

When the Roman general, sitting at supper with a plate of turnips before him, was solicited by large presents to betray his trust, he asked the messengers whether he that could sup on turnips was a man likely to sell his country. Upon him who has reduced his senses to obedience, temptation has lost its power; he is able to attend impartially to Virtue, and execute her commands without hesitation.

To set the mind above the appetites is the end of abstinence, which one of the fathers observes to be not a virtue, but the ground-work of virtue. By forbearing to do what may innocently be done, we may add hourly new vigour or resolution, and secure the power of resistance when pleasure or interest shall lend their charms to guilt.



T H E
I D L E R.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

N° LIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 21.

TO THE IDLER.

STR.

I Have a wife that keeps Good Company. You know that the word Good varies it's meaning according to the value set upon different qualities in different places. To be a good man in a college is to be learned; in a camp, to be brave; and in the city, to be rich. By Good Company, in the place which I have the misfortune to inhabit, we understand only those from whom any good can be learned, whether wisdom or virtue; or by whom any good can be conferred, whether profit or reputation. Good Company is the company of those whose birth is high, and whose riches are great, or of those whom the rich and noble admit to familiarity.

I am a gentleman of a fortune by no means exuberant, but more than equal to the wants of my family, and for some years equal to our desires. My wife, who had never been accustomed to splendour, joined her endeavours to mine in the superintendence of our oeconomy; we lived in decent plenty, and were not excluded from moderate pleasures.

But slight causes produce great effects. All my happiness has been destroyed by change of place; virtue is too often merely local; in some situations the air diseases the body, and in others poisons the mind. Being obliged to remove my habitation, I was led by my evil genius to a convenient house in a street where many of the nobility reside. We had scarcely ranged our furniture, and aired our rooms, when my wife be-

gan to grow discontented, and to wonder what the neighbours would think when they saw so few chairs and chandeliers at her door.

Her acquaintance who came to see her from the quarter that we had left, mortified her without design, by continual enquiries about the ladies, whose houses they viewed from our windows. She was ashamed to confess that she had no intercourse with them, and sheltered her distress under general answers, which always tended to raise suspicion that she knew more than she would tell; but she was often reduced to difficulties, when the course of talk introduced questions about the furniture, or ornaments of their houses, which, when she could get no intelligence, she was forced to pass slightly over, as things which she saw so often, that she never minded them.

To all these vexations she was resolved to put an end, and redoubled her visits to those few of her friends who visited those who kept Good Company; and, if ever she met a lady of quality, forced herself into notice by respect and assiduity. Her advances were generally rejected; and she heard them, as they went down stairs, talk how some creatures put themselves forward.

She was not discouraged, but crept forward from one to another; and, as perseverance will do great things, sapped her way unperceived, till, unexpectedly, she appeared at the card-table of Lady Biddy Porpoise, a lethargick virgin of seventy-six, whom all the families

milies in the next square visited very punctually when she was not at home.

This was the first step of that elevation to which my wife has since ascended. For five months she had no name in her mouth but that of Lady Biddy, who, let the world say what it would, had a fine understanding, and such a command of her temper, that, whether she won or lost, she slept over her cards.

At Lady Biddy's she met with Lady Tawdry, whose favour she gained by estimating her ear-rings, which were counterfeit, at twice the value of real diamonds. When she had once entered two houses of distinction, she was easily admitted into more, and in ten weeks had all her time anticipated by parties and engagements. Every morning she is bespoken, in the summer, for the gardens; in the winter, for a sale; ever afternoon she has visits to pay, and every night brings an inviolable appointment, or an assembly in which the best company in the town were to appear.

You will easily imagine that much of my domestick comfort is withdrawn. I never see my wife but in the hurry of preparation, or the languor of weariness. To dress and to undress is almost her whole business in private, and the servants take advantage of her negligence to encrease expence. But I can supply her omissions by my own diligence, and should not much regret this new course of life, if it did nothing more than transfer to me the care of our accounts. The changes which it has made are more vexatious. My wife has no longer the use of her understanding. She has no rule of action but the fashion. She has no opinion but that of the people of quality. She has no language but the dialect of her own set of company. She hates and admires in humble imitation; and echoes the words

charming and detestable without consulting her own perceptions.

If for a few minutes we sit down together, she entertains me with the repartees of Lady Cackle, or the conversation of Lord Whiffler and Miss Quick, and wonders to find me receiving with indifference sayings which put all the company into laughter.

By her old friends she is no longer very willing to be seen, but she must not rid herself of them all at once; and is sometimes surprized by her best visitants in company which she would not shew, and cannot hide; but from the moment that a countess enters, she takes care neither to hear nor see them: they soon find themselves neglected and retire, and she tells her ladyship that they are somehow related at a great distance, and that as they are good sort of people she cannot be rude to them.

As by this ambitious union with those that are above her, she is always forced upon disadvantageous comparisons of her condition with theirs, she has a constant source of misery within; and never returns from glittering assemblies and magnificent apartments but she grows out her discontent, and wonders why she was doomed to so indigent a state. When she attends the duchess to a sale, she always sees something that she cannot buy; and, that she may not seem wholly insignificant, she will sometimes venture to bid, and often makes acquisitions which she did not want at prices which she cannot afford.

What adds to all this uneasiness is, that this expence is without use, and this vanity without honour; she forsakes houses where she might be courted, for those where she is only suffered; her equals are daily made her enemies, and her superiors will never be her friends.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

Nº LIV. SATURDAY, APRIL 28.

TO THE IDLER.

STR,
YOU have lately entertained your admirers with the case of an unfortunate Husband, and thereby given a demonstrative proof you are not averse even to hear appeals and terminate dif-

ferences between man and wife; I therefore take the liberty to present you with the case of an injured lady, which, as it chiefly relates to what I think the lawyers call a Point of Law, I shall do in as juridical a manner as I am capable, and submit it to the consideration of the learned gentlemen of that profession.

Imprimis.

Imprints. In the style of my marriage articles, a marriage was had and solemnized, about six months ago, between me and Mr. Savecharges, a gentleman possessed of a plentiful fortune of his own, and one who, I was persuaded, would improve, and not spend mine.

Before our marriage Mr. Savecharges had all along preferred the salutary exercise of walking on foot, to the distempered ease, as he terms it, of lolling in a chariot: but notwithstanding his fine panegyrics on walking, the great advantages the infantry were in the sole possession of, and the many dreadful dangers they escaped, he found I had very different notions of an equipage, and was not easily to be converted, or gained over to his party.

An equipage I was determined to have, whenever I married. I too well knew the disposition of my intended consort to leave the providing one entirely to his honour, and flatter myself Mr. Savecharges has, in the articles made previous to our marriage, *agreed to keep me a coach*; but lest I should be mistaken, or the attornies should not have done me justice in methodizing or legalizing these half dozen words, I will set about and transcribe that part of the agreement, which will explain the matter to you much better than can be done by one who is so deeply interested in the event; and shew on what foundation I build my hopes of being soon under the transporting, delightful denomination of a fashionable lady, who enjoys the exalted and much envied felicity of bowling about in her own coach.

'And further, the said Solomon Savecharges, for divers good causes and considerations him hereunto moving, hath agreed, and doth hereby agree, that the said Solomon Savecharges shall and will, so soon as conveniently may be after the solemnization of the said intended marriage, at his own proper cost and charges, find and provide a certain vehicle or four-wheel carriage, commonly called or known by the name of a Coach, which said vehicle or wheel-carriage, so called or known by the name of a Coach, shall be used and enjoyed by the said Sukey Modish, his intended wife,' [pray mind that, Mr. Idler] 'at such times and in such manner as the said Sukey Modish shall think fit and convenient.'

Such, Mr. Idler, is the agreement

my passionate admirer entered into; and what the dear frugal husband calls a performance of it remains to be described. Soon after the ceremony of signing and sealing was over, our wedding-cloaths being sent home, and, in short, every thing in readiness except the coach, my own shadow was scarce more constant than my passionate lover in his attendance on me: wearied by his perpetual importunities for what he called a completion of his bliss, I consented to make him happy; in a few days I gave him my hand, and, attended by Hymen in his saffron-robcs, retired to a country-seat of my husband's, where the honeymoon flew over our heads ere we had time to recollect ourselves, or think of our engagements in town. Well, to town we came, and you may be sure, Sir, I expected to step into my coach on my arrival here; but, what was my surprize and disappointment, when, instead of this, he began to sound in my ears, That the interest of money was low, very low; and what a terrible thing it was to be encumbered with a little regiment of servants in these hard times. I could easily perceive what all this tended to, but would not seem to understand him; which made it highly necessary for Mr. Savecharges to explain himself more intelligibly; to harp upon and protest he dreaded the expence of keeping a coach. And, truly, for his part, he could not conceive how the pleasure resulting from such a convenience could be any way adequate to the heavy expence attending it. I now thought it high time to speak with equal plainness; and told him, as the fortune I brought fairly entitled me to ride in my own coach, and as I was sensible his circumstances would very well afford it, he must pardon me if I insisted on a performance of his agreement.

I appeal to you, Mr. Idler, whether any thing could be more civil, more complaisant, than this? And would you believe it, the creature, in return, a few days after, accosted me in an offended tone, 'with—Madam, I can now tell you your coach is ready; and since you are so passionately fond of one, I intend you the honour of keeping a pair of horses. You insisted upon having an article of pin-money, and horses are no part of my agreement.' Base, designing wretch!—I beg your pardon, Mr. Idler, the very recital of

such mean, ungentleman-like behaviour, fires my blood, and lights up a flame within me. But hence, thou worst of monsters, ill-timed Rage, and let me not spoil my cause for want of temper.

Now, though I am convinced I might make a worse use of part of the pin-money, than by extending my bounty towards the support of so useful a part of the brute creation; yet, like a true-born Englishwoman, I am so tenacious of my rights and privileges, and moreover so good a friend to the gentlemen of the law, that I protest, Mr. Idler, sooner than tamely give up the point, and be quibbled out of my right, I will receive my pin-money, as it were, with one hand, and pay it to them with the other; provided they will give me, or, which is the same thing, my trustees, encouragement to commence a suit against this dear frugal husband of mine.

And of this I can't have the least shadow of doubt, inasmuch as I have been told by very good authority, it is some

way or other laid down as a rule, 'That whenever the law doth give any thing to one, it giveth impliedly whatever is necessary for the taking and enjoying the same*.' Now I would gladly know what enjoyment I, or any lady in the kingdom, can have of a coach without horses? The answer is obvious—None at all! For, as Serj. Catlyne very wisely observes—'Though a coach has wheels, to the end it may thereby and by virtue thereof be enabled to move; yet in point of utility it may as well have none, if they are not put in motion by means of it's vital parts, that is, the horses.'

And therefore, Sir, I humbly hope you and the learned in the law will be of opinion, that two certain animals, or quadruped creatures, commonly called or known by the name of Horses, ought to be annexed to, and go along with the coach.

SUKEY SAVECHARGES.

N° LV. SATURDAY, MAY 5.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

I Have taken the liberty of laying before you my complaint, and of desiring advice or consolation with the greater confidence, because I believe many other writers have suffered the same indignities with myself, and hope my quarrel will be regarded by you and your readers as the common cause of literature.

Having been long a student, I thought myself qualified in time to become an author. My enquiries have been much diversified and far extended, and not finding my genius directing me by irresistible impulse to any particular subject, I deliberated three years which part of knowledge to illustrate by my labours. Choice is more often determined by accident than by reason: I walked abroad one morning with a curious lady, and by her enquiries and observations was incited to write the natural history of the county in which I reside.

Natural history is no work for one that loves his chair or his bed. Speculation

may be pursued on a soft couch, but nature must be observed in the open air. I have collected materials with indefatigable pertinacity. I have gathered glow-worms in the evening, and snails in the morning; I have seen the daisy close and open, I have heard the owl shriek at midnight, and hunted insects in the heat of noon.

Seven years I was employed in collecting animals and vegetables, and then found that my design was yet imperfect. The subterranean treasure of the place had been passed unobserved, and another year was to be spent in mines and coal-pits. What I had already done supplied a sufficient motive to do more. I acquainted myself with the black inhabitants of metallic caverns, and, in defiance of damps and floods, wandered through the gloomy labyrinths, and gathered fossils from every fissure.

At last I began to write, and as I finished any section of my book, read it to such of my friends as were most skillful in the matter which it treated. None of them were satisfied; one disliked the disposition of the parts, another the co-

hours of the style; one advised me to enlarge, another to abridge. I resolved to read no more, but to take my own way and write on, for by consultation I only perplexed my thoughts and retarded my work.

The book was at last finished, and I did not doubt but my labour would be repaid by profit, and my ambition satisfied with honours. I considered that Natural History is neither temporary nor local, and that though I limited my enquiries to my own county, yet every part of the earth has productions common to all the rest. Civil history may be partially studied, the revolutions of one nation may be neglected by another, but after that in which all have an interest, all must be inquisitive. No man can have funk so far into stupidity as not to consider the properties of the ground on which he walks, of the plants on which he feeds, or the animals that delight his ear or amuse his eye; and therefore I computed that universal curiosity would call for many editions of my book, and that in five years I should gain fifteen thousand pounds by the sale of thirty thousand copies.

When I began to write I insured the house, and suffered the utmost solicitude when I entrusted my book to the carrier, though I had secured it against mischances by lodging two transcripts in different places. At my arrival, I expected that the patrons of learning would contend for the honour of a dedication, and resolved to maintain the dignity of letters, by a haughty contempt of pecuniary solicitations.

I took lodgings near the house of the Royal Society, and expected every morning a visit from the president. I walked in the Park, and wondered that I overheard no mention of the great Naturalist. At last I visited a noble earl, and told him of my work; he answered, that he was under an engagement never to subscribe. I was angry to have that refused which I did not mean to ask; and concealed my design of making him immortal. I went next day to another, and, in resentment of my late affront, offered to prefix his name to my new book. He said, coldly, that *he did not understand those things*; another thought

there were too many books; and another would talk with me when the races were over.

Being amazed to find a man of learning so indecently slighted, I resolved to indulge the philosophical pride of retirement and independence. I then sent to some of the principal booksellers the plan of my book, and bespoke a large room in the next tavern, that I might more commodiously see them together, and enjoy the contest, while they were outbidding one another. I drank my coffee, and yet nobody was come; at last I received a note from one, to tell me, that he was going out of town; and from another, that Natural History was out of his way; at last there came a grave man, who desired to see the work, and, without opening it, told me, that a book of that size *would never do*.

I then condescended to step into shops, and mention my work to the masters. Some never dealt with authors; others had their hands full; some never had known such a dead time; others had lost by all that they had published for the last twelvemonth. One offered to print my work, if I could procure subscriptions for five hundred, and would allow me two hundred copies for my property. I lost my patience, and gave him a kick, for which he has indicted me.

I can easily perceive, that there is a combination among them to defeat my expectations; and I find it so general, that I am sure it must have been long concerted. I suppose some of my friends, to whom I read the first part, gave notice of my design, and, perhaps, sold the treacherous intelligence at a higher price than the fraudulence of trade will now allow me for my book.

Inform me, Mr. Idler, what I must do; where must knowledge and industry find their recompence, thus neglected by the high, and cheated by the low? I sometimes resolve to print my book at my own expence, and, like the Sibyl, double the price; and sometimes am tempted, in emulation of Raleigh, to throw it into the fire, and leave this sordid generation to the curses of posterity. Tell me, dear Idler, what I shall do.

I am, Sir. &c.

Nº LVI. SATURDAY, MAY 12.

THERE is such difference between the pursuits of men, that one part of the inhabitants of a great city lives to little other purpose than to wonder at the rest. Some have hopes and fears, wishes and aversions, which never enter into the thoughts of others, and enquiry is laboriously exerted to gain that which those who possess it are ready to throw away.

To those who are accustomed to value every thing by it's use, and have no such superfluity of time or money as may prompt them to unnatural wants or capricious emulations, nothing appears more improbable or extravagant than the love of curiosities, or that desire of accumulating trifles, which distinguishes many by whom no other distinction could have ever been obtained.

He that has lived without knowing to what height desire may be raised by vanity, with what rapture baubles are snatched out of the hands of rival collectors, how the eagerness of one raises eagerness in another, and one worthless purchase makes a second necessary, may, by passing a few hours at an auction, learn more than can be shewn by many volumes of maxims or essays.

The advertisement of a sale is a signal which at once puts a thousand hearts in motion, and brings contenders from every part to the scene of distribution. He that had resolved to buy no more, feels his constancy subdued; there is now something in the catalogue which completes his cabinet, and which he was never before able to find. He whose sober reflections inform him, that of adding collection to collection there is no end; and that it is wise to leave early that which must be left imperfect at last, yet cannot withhold himself from coming to see what it is that brings so many together, and when he comes is soon overpowered by his habitual passion; he is attracted by rarity, seduced by example, and inflamed by competition.

While the stores of pride and happiness are surveyed, one looks with longing eyes and gloomy countenance on that which he despairs to gain from a

richer bidder; another keeps his eye with care from settling too long on that which he most earnestly desires; and another, with more art than virtue, depreciates that which he values most, in hope to have it at an easy rate.

The novice is often surprized to see what minute and unimportant discriminations increase or diminish value. An irregular contortion of a turbinated shell, which common eyes pass unregarded, will ten times treble it's price in the imagination of philosophers. Beauty is far from operating upon collectors as upon low and vulgar minds, even where beauty might be thought the only quality that could deserve notice. Among the shells that please by their variety of colours, if one can be found accidentally deformed by a cloudy spot, it is boasted as the pride of the collection. China is sometimes purchased for little less than it's weight in gold, only because it is old, though neither less brittle, nor better painted than the modern; and brown china is caught up with extasy, though no reason can be imagined for which it should be preferred to common vessels of common clay.

The fate of prints and coins is equally inexplicable. Some prints are treasured up as inestimably valuable, because the impression was made before the plate was finished. Of coins the price rises not from the purity of the metal, the excellence of the legend, or the chronological use. A piece, of which neither the inscription can be read, nor the face distinguished, if there remain of it but enough to shew that it is rare, will be sought by contending nations, and dignify the treasury in which it shall be shown.

Whether this curiosity, so barren of immediate advantage, and so liable to depravation, does more harm or good, is not easily decided. It's harm is apparent at the first view. It fills the mind with trifling ambition; fixes the attention upon things which have seldom any tendency towards virtue or wisdom; employs in idle inquiries the time that is given for better purposes; and often
ends

ends in mean and dishonest practices, when desire increases by indulgence beyond the power of honest gratification.

These are the effects of curiosity in excess; but what passion in excess will not become vicious? All indifferent qualities and practices are bad if they are compared with those which are good, and good if they are opposed to those that are bad. The pride or the pleasure of making collections, if it be restrained by prudence and morality, produces a pleasing remission after more laborious

studies; furnishes an amusement not wholly unprofitable for that part of life, the greater part of many lives, which would otherwise be lost in idleness or vice; it produces an useful traffick between the industry of indigence and the curiosity of wealth; it brings many things to notice that would be neglected; and by fixing the thoughts upon intellectual pleasures, resists the natural encroachments of sensuality, and maintains the mind in her lawful superiority.

Nº LVII. SATURDAY, MAY 19.

PRUDENCE is of more frequent use than any other intellectual quality; it is exerted on slight occasions, and called into act by the cursory business of common life.

Whatever is universally necessary, has been granted to mankind on easy terms. Prudence, as it is always wanted, is without great difficulty obtained. It requires neither extensive view nor profound search, but forces itself, by spontaneous impulse, upon a mind neither great nor busy, neither engrossed by vast designs nor distracted by multiplicity of attention.

Prudence operates on life in the same manner as rules on composition; it produces vigilance rather than elevation, rather prevents loss, than procures advantage; and often escapes miscarriages, but seldom reaches either power or honour. It quenches that ardour of enterprize, by which every thing is done that can claim praise or admiration; and represses that generous temerity which often fails and often succeeds. Rules may obviate faults, but can never confer beauties; and Prudence keeps life safe, but does not often make it happy. The world is not amazed with prodigies of excellence, but when wit tramples upon rules, and magnanimity breaks the chains of prudence.

One of the most prudent of all that have fallen within my observation, is my old companion Sophron, who has passed through the world in quiet, by perpetual adherence to a few plain maxims, and wonders how contention and distress can so often happen.

The first principle of Sophron is to *run no hazards*. Though he loves mo-

ney, he is of opinion, that frugality is a more certain source of riches than industry. It is to no purpose that any prospect of large profit is set before him; he believes little about futurity, and does not love to trust his money out of his sight, for nobody knows what may happen. He has a small estate, which he lets at the old rent, because *it is better to have a little than nothing*; but he rigorously demands payment on the stated day, for *he that cannot pay one quarter cannot pay two*. If he is told of any improvements in agriculture, he likes the old way, has observed that changes very seldom answer expectation, is of opinion that our forefathers knew how to till the ground as well as we; and concludes with an argument that nothing can overpower, that the expence of planting and fencing is immediate, and the advantage distant, and that *he is no wise man who will quit a certainty for an uncertainty*.

Another of Sophron's rules is, *to mind no business but his own*. In the state he is of no party, but hears and speaks of public affairs with the same coldness as of the administration of some ancient republic. If any flagrant act of fraud or oppression is mentioned, he hopes that *all is not true that is told*: if misconduct or corruption puts the nation in a flame, he hopes that *every man means well*. At elections he leaves his dependents to their own choice, and declines to vote himself, for every candidate is a good man, whom he is unwilling to oppose or offend.

If disputes happen among his neighbours, he observes an invariable and cold neutrality. His punctuality has gained

gained him the reputation of honesty, and his caution that of wisdom, and few would refuse to refer their claims to his award. He might have prevented many expensive law-suits, and quenched many a feud in it's first smoke, but always refuses the office of arbitration, because he must decide against one or the other.

With the affairs of other families he is always unacquainted. He sees estates bought and sold, squandered and increased, without praising the economist, or censuring the spendthrift. He never courts the rising, lest they should fall; nor insults the fallen, lest they should rise again. His caution has the appearance of virtue, and all who do not want his help praise his benevolence; but if any man solicits his assistance, he has just sent away all his money; and when the petitioner is gone, declares to his family that he is sorry for his misfortunes, has always looked upon him with particular kindness, and therefore could not lend him money, lest he should destroy their friendship by the necessity of enforcing payment.

Of domestic misfortunes he has never heard. When he is told the hundredth time of a gentleman's daughter who has married the coachman, he lifts up his hands with astonishment, for he always thought her a very sober girl. When nuptial quarrels, after having filled the country with talk and laughter, at last end in separation, he never can conceive how it happened, for he looked upon them as a happy couple.

If his advice is asked, he never gives

any particular direction, because events are uncertain, and he will bring no blame upon himself; but he takes the consulter tenderly by the hand, tells him he makes his case his own, and advises him not to act rashly, but to weigh the reasons on both sides; observes that a man may be as easily too hasty as too slow, and that as many fail by doing too much as too little; that *a wise man has two ears and one tongue*; and that *little said is soon amended*; that he could tell him this and that, but that after all every man is the best judge of his own affairs.

With this some are satisfied, and go home with great reverence of Sophron's wisdom; and none are offended, because every one is left in full possession of his own opinion.

Sophron gives no characters. It is equally vain to tell him of vice and virtue, for he has remarked that no man likes to be censured, and that very few are delighted with the praises of another. He has a few terms which he uses to all alike. With respect to fortune, he believes every family to be in good circumstances; he never exalts any understanding by lavish praise, yet he meets with none but very sensible people. Every man is honest and hearty, and every woman is a good creature.

Thus Sophron creeps, along neither loved nor hated, neither favoured nor opposed; he has never attempted to grow rich, for fear of growing poor; he has raised no friends, for fear of making enemies.

Nº LVIII. SATURDAY, MAY 26.

PLEASURE is very seldom found where it is sought. Our brightest blazes of gladness are commonly kindled by unexpected sparks. The flowers which scatter their odours from time to time in the paths of life, grow up without culture from seeds scattered by chance.

Nothing is more hopeless than a scheme of merriment. Wits and humourists are brought together from distant quarters by preconcerted invitations; they come attended by their admirers prepared to laugh and to applaud: they gaze a-while on each other, ashamed to be silent, and afraid to speak; every

man is discontented with himself, grows angry with those that give him pain, and resolves that he will contribute nothing to the merriment of such worthless company. Wine inflames the general malignity, and changes sullenness to petulance, till at last none can bear any longer the presence of the rest. They retire to vent their indignation in safer places, where they are heard with attention; their importance is restored, they recover their good humour, and gladden the night with wit and jocularity.

Merriment is always the effect of a sudden impression. The jest which is expected

expected is already destroyed. The most active imagination will be sometimes torpid under the frigid influence of melancholy, and sometimes occasions will be wanting to tempt the mind, however volatile, to sallies and excursions. Nothing was ever said with uncommon felicity, but by the co-operation of chance; and therefore wit as well as valour must be content to share its honours with fortune.

All other pleasures are equally uncertain; the general remedy of uneasiness is change of place; almost every one has some journey of pleasure in his mind, with which he flatters his expectation. He that travels in theory has no inconvenience; he has shade and sunshine at his disposal, and wherever he alights finds tables of plenty and looks of gaiety. Their ideas are indulged till the day of departure arrives, the chaise is called, and the progress of happiness begins.

A few miles teach him the fallacies of imagination. The road is dusty, the air is sultry, the horses are sluggish, and the postilion brutal. He longs for the time of dinner, that he may eat and rest. The inn is crowded, his orders are neglected, and nothing remains but that he devour in haste what the cook has spoiled, and drive on in quest of better entertainment. He finds at night a more commodious house, but the

best is always worse than he expected.

He at last enters his native province, and resolves to feast his mind with the conversation of his old friends, and the recollection of juvenile frolics. He stops at the house of his friend, whom he designs to overpower with pleasure by the unexpected interview. He is not known till he tells his name, and revives the memory of himself by a gradual explanation. He is then coldly received, and ceremoniously feasted. He hastes away to another, whom his affairs have called to a distant place, and having seen the empty house, goes away disgusted, by a disappointment which could not be intended because it could not be foreseen. At the next house he finds every face clouded with misfortune, and is regarded with malevolence as an unreasonable intruder, who comes not to visit but to insult them.

It is seldom that we find either men or places such as we expect them. He that has pictured a prospect upon his fancy, will receive little pleasure from his eyes; he that has anticipated the conversation of a wit, will wonder to what prejudice he owes his reputation. Yet it is necessary to hope, though hope should always be deluded; for hope itself is happiness, and its frustrations, however frequent, are yet less dreadful than its extinction.

Nº LIX. SATURDAY, JUNE 2.

IN the common enjoyments of life, we cannot very liberally indulge the present hour, but by anticipating part of the pleasure which might have relieved the tediousness of another day; and any uncommon exertion of strength, or perseverance in labour, is succeeded by a long interval of languor and weariness. Whatever advantage we snatch beyond the certain portion allotted us by nature, is like money spent before it is due, which at the time of regular payment will be missed and regretted.

Fame, like all other things which are supposed to give or to encrease happiness, is dispensed with the same equality of distribution. He that is loudly praised will be clamorously censured; he that rises hastily into fame will be in danger of sinking suddenly into oblivion.

Of many writers who filled their age with wonder, and whose names we find celebrated in the books of their contemporaries, the works are now no longer to be seen, or are seen only amidst the lumber of libraries which are seldom visited, where they lie only to shew the deceitfulness of hope, and the uncertainty of honour.

Of the decline of reputation many causes may be assigned. It is commonly lost because it never was deserved; and was conferred at first, not by the suffrage of criticism, but by the fondness of friendship, or servility of flattery. The great and popular are very freely applauded, but all soon grow weary of echoing to each other a name which has no other claim to notice, but that many mouths are pronouncing it at once.

But

But many have lost the final reward of their labours, because they were too hasty to enjoy it. They have laid hold on recent occurrences, and eminent names, and delighted their readers with allusions and remarks, in which all were interested, and to which all therefore were attentive. But the effect ceased with its cause; the time quickly came when new events drove the former from memory, when the vicissitudes of the world brought new hopes and fears, transferred the love and hatred of the public or other agents, and the writer, whose works were no longer assisted by gratitude or resentment, was left to the cold regard of idle curiosity.

He that writes upon general principles, or delivers universal truths, may hope to be often read, because his work will be equally useful at all times and in every country; but he cannot expect it to be received with eagerness, or to spread with rapidity, because desire can have no particular stimulation; that which is to be loved long must be loved with reason rather than with passion.

He that lays out his labours upon temporary subjects, easily finds readers, and quickly loses them; for what should make the book valued when its subject is no more?

These observations will shew the reason why the poem of Hudibras is almost forgotten, however embellished with sentiments and diversified with allusions, however bright with wit, and however solid with truth. The hypocrisy which it detected, and the folly which it ridiculed, have long vanished from public notice. Those who had felt the mischief of discord, and the tyranny of usurpation, read it with rapture, for every line brought back to memory something known, and gratified resentment; by the just censure of something hated. But the book which was once quoted by princes, and which supplied conversation to all the assemblies of the gay and witty, is now seldom mentioned, and even by those that affect to mention it, is seldom read. So vainly is wit lavished upon fugitive topics, so little can architecture secure duration when the ground is false.

Nº LX. SATURDAY, JUNE 9.

CRITICISM is a study by which men grow important and formidable at very small expence. The power of invention has been conferred by Nature upon few, and the labour of learning those sciences which may by mere labour be obtained is too great to be willingly endured; but every man can exert such judgment as he has upon the works of others; and he whom Nature has made weak, and Idleness keeps ignorant, may yet support his vanity by the name of a Critick.

I hope it will give comfort to great numbers who are passing through the world in obscurity when I inform them how easily distinction may be obtained. All the other powers of literature are coy and haughty, they must be long courted, and at last are not always gained; but Criticism is a goddess easy of access and forward of advance, who will meet the slow, and encourage the timorous; the want of meaning she supplies with words, and the want of spirit she recompenses with malignity.

This profession has one recommendation peculiar to itself, that it gives vent

to malignity without real mischief. No genius was ever blasted by the breath of criticks. The poison which, if confined, would have burst the heart, fumes away in empty hisses, and malice is set at ease with very little danger to merit. The critick is the only man whose triumph is without another's pain, and whose greatness does not rise upon another's ruin.

To a study at once so easy and so reputable, so malicious and so harmless, it cannot be necessary to invite my readers by a long or laboured exhortation; it is sufficient, since all would be criticks if they could, to shew by one eminent example that all can be criticks if they will.

Dick Minim, after the common course of puerile studies, in which he was no great proficient, was put apprentice to a brewer, with whom he had lived two years, when his uncle died in the city, and left him a large fortune in the stocks. Dick had for six months before used the company of the lower players, of whom he had learned to scorn a trade, and being now at liberty to follow his genius,

he resolved to be a man of wit and humour. That he might be properly initiated in his new character, he frequented the coffee-houses near the theatres, where he listened very diligently, day after day, to those who talked of language and sentiments, and unities and catastrophes, till by slow degrees he began to think that he understood something of the stage, and hoped in time to talk himself.

But he did not trust so much to natural sagacity, as wholly to neglect the help of books. When the theatres were shut, he retired to Richmond with a few select writers, whose opinions he impressed upon his memory by unwearied diligence; and, when he returned with other wits to the town, was able to tell in very proper phrases, that the chief business of art is to copy nature; that a perfect writer is not to be expected, because genius decays as judgment increases; that the great art is the art of blotting; and that, according to the rule of Horace, every piece should be kept nine years.

Of the great authors he now began to display the characters, laying down as an universal position, that all had beauties and defects. His opinion was, that Shakespeare, committing himself wholly to the impulse of nature, wanted that correctness which learning would have given him; and that Jonson, trusting to learning, did not sufficiently cast his eye on nature. He blamed the Stanza of Spenser, and could not bear the Hexameters of Sidney. Denham and Waller he held the first reformers of English numbers; and thought that if Waller could have obtained the strength of Denham, or Denham the sweetness of Waller, there had been nothing wanting to complete a poet. He often expressed his commiseration of Dryden's poverty, and his indignation at the age which suffered him to write for bread; he repeated with rapture the first lines of *All for Love*, but wondered at the corruption of taste which could bear any thing so unnatural as rhyming tragedies. In *Otway* he found uncommon powers of moving the passions, but was disgusted by his general negligence, and blamed him for making a conspirator his hero; and never concluded his disquisition, without remarking how happily the sound of the clock is made to alarm the audience. Southern would have been

his favourite, but that he mixes comick with tragick scenes, intercepts the natural course of the passions, and fills the mind with a wild confusion of mirth and melancholy. The versification of Rowe he thought too melodious for the stage, and too little varied in different passions. He made it the great fault of Congreve, that all his persons were wits, and that he always wrote with more art than nature. He considered Cato rather as a poem than a play, and allowed Addison to be the complete master of allegory and grave humour, but paid no great deference to him as a critick. He thought the chief merit of Prior was in his easy tales and lighter poems, though he allowed that his Solomon had many noble sentiments elegantly expressed. In Swift he discovered an inimitable vein of irony, and an easiness which all would hope and few would attain. Pope he was inclined to degrade from a poet to a versifier, and thought his numbers rather luscious than sweet. He often lamented the neglect of Phædra and Hippolitus, and wished to see the stage under better regulations.

These assertions passed commonly uncontradicted; and if now and then an opponent started up, he was quickly repressed by the suffrages of the company, and Minim went away from every dispute with elation of heart and increase of confidence.

He now grew conscious of his abilities, and began to talk of the present state of dramatick poetry; wondered what was become of the comick genius which supplied our ancestors with wit and pleasantry, and why no writer could be found that durst now venture beyond a farce. He saw no reason for thinking that the vein of humour was exhausted, since we live in a country where liberty suffers every character to spread itself to its utmost bulk, and which therefore produces more originals than all the rest of the world together. Of tragedy he concluded business to be the soul, and yet often hinted that love predominates too much upon the modern stage.

He was now an acknowledged critick, and had his own seat in a coffee-house, and headed a party in the pit. Minim has more vanity than ill-nature, and seldom desires to do much mischief; he will perhaps murmur a little in the ear of him that sits next him, but endeavours to influence the audience to favour,

by clapping when an actor exclaims *ye Gods*, or laments the misery of his country.

By degrees he was admitted to rehearsals, and many of his friends are of opinion, that our present poets are indebted to him for their happiest thoughts; by his contrivance the bell was rung twice in Barbarossa, and by his persuasion the author of Cleone concluded his play without a couplet; for what can be more absurd, said Minim, than that part of a play should be rhymed, and part written in blank verse? and by what acquisition of faculties is the speaker, who never could find rhymes before, enabled to rhyme at the conclusion of an act?

He is the great investigator of hidden beauties, and is particularly delighted when he finds *the sound and echo to the sense*. He has read all our poets with particular attention to this delicacy of versification, and wonders at the supineness with which their works have been hitherto perused, so that no man has found the sound of a drum in this distich—

‘When pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,
‘Was beat with fist instead of a stick;’

and that the wonderful lines upon Honour and a Bubble have hitherto passed without notice.

‘Honour is like the glassy bubble,
‘Which costs philosophers such trouble;
‘Where one part crack’d, the whole does fly,
‘And wits are crack’d to find out why.’

In these verses, says Minim, we have two striking accommodations of the sound to the sense. It is impossible to utter the two lines emphatically without an act like that which they describe; *Bubble* and *Trouble* causing a momentary inflation of the cheeks by the retention of the breath, which is afterwards forcibly emitted, as in the practice of *blowing bubbles*. But the greatest excellence is in the third line, which is *crack’d* in the middle to express a crack, and then shivers into monosyllables. Yet has this diamond lain neglected with common stones, and among the innumerable admirers of Hudibras the observation of this superlative passage has been reserved for the sagacity of Minim.

Nº LXI. SATURDAY, JUNE 16.

MR. Minim had now advanced himself to the zenith of critical reputation; when he was in the pit, every eye in the boxes was fixed upon him; when he entered his coffee-house, he was surrounded by circles of candidates, who passed their novitiate of literature under his tuition; his opinion was asked by all who had no opinion of their own, and yet loved to debate and decide; and no composition was supposed to pass in safety to posterity, till it had been secured by Minim’s approbation.

Minim professes great admiration of the wisdom and munificence by which the academies of the Continent were raised, and often wishes for some standard of taste, for some tribunal, to which merit may appeal from caprice, prejudice, and malignity. He has formed a plan for an Academy of Criticism, where every work of imagination may be read before it is printed, and which shall authoritatively direct the theatres what pieces to receive or reject, to exclude or to revive.

Such an institution would, in Dick’s opinion, spread the fame of English literature over Europe, and make London the metropolis of elegance and politeness, the place to which the learned and ingenious of all countries would repair for instruction and improvement; and where nothing would any longer be applauded or endured that was not conformed to the nicest rules, and finished with the highest elegance.

Till some happy conjunction of the planets shall dispose our princes or ministers to make themselves immortal by such an academy, Minim contents himself to preside four nights in a week in a critical society selected by himself, where he is heard without contradiction, and whence his judgment is disseminated through the great vulgar and the small.

When he is placed in the chair of criticism, he declares loudly for the noble simplicity of our ancestors, in opposition to the petty refinements, and ornamental luxuriance. Sometimes he is sunk in despair, and perceives false delicacy

easy daily gaining ground, and sometimes brightens his countenance with a gleam of hope, and predicts the revival of the true sublime. He then fulminates his loudest censures against the monkish barbarity of rhyme; wonders how beings that pretend to reason can be pleased with one line always ending like another; tells how unjustly and unnaturally sense is sacrificed to sound; how often the best thoughts are mangled by the necessity of confining or extending them to the dimensions of a couplet; and rejoices that genius has, in our days, shaken off the shackles which had encumbered it so long. Yet he allows that rhyme may sometimes be borne, if the lines be often broken, and the pauses judiciously diversified.

From blank verse he makes an easy transition to Milton, whom he produces as an example of the slow advance of lasting reputation. Milton is the only writer in whose books *Minim* can read for ever without weariness. What cause it is that exempts this pleasure from satiety he has long and diligently enquired, and believes it to consist in the perpetual variation of the numbers, by which the ear is gratified and the attention awakened. The lines that are commonly thought rugged and unmusical, he conceives to have been written to temper the melodious luxury of the rest, or to express things by a proper cadence; for he scarcely finds a verse that has not this favourite beauty; he declares that he could shiver in a hot-house when he reads that

* The ground

* Burns froze, and cold performs th' effects of fire;

and that when Milton bewails his blindness; the verse

* So thick a drop serene has quench'd these orbs,

has, he knows not how, something that strikes him with an obscure sensation like that which he fancies would be felt from the sound of darkness.

Minim is not so confident of his rules of judgment as not very eagerly to

catch new light from the name of the author. He is commonly so prudent as to spare those whom he cannot resist, unless, as will sometimes happen, he finds the publick combined against them. But a fresh pretender to fame he is strongly inclined to censure, till his own honour requires that he commend him. Till he knows the success of a composition, he intrenches himself in general terms; there are some new thoughts and beautiful passages, but there is likewise much which he would have advised the author to expunge. He has several favourite epithets, of which he has never settled the meaning, but which are very commodiously applied to books which he has not read, or cannot understand. One is *manly*, another is *dry*, another *stiff*, and another *simpy*; sometimes he discovers delicacy of style, and sometimes meets with *strange expressions*.

He is never so great or so happy, as when a youth of promising parts is brought to receive his directions for the prosecution of his studies. He then puts on a very serious air; he advises the pupil to read none but the best authors, and when he finds one congenial to his own mind, to study his beauties, but avoid his faults; and, when he sits down to write, to consider how his favourite author would think at the present time on the present occasion. He exhorts him to catch those moments when he finds his thoughts expanded and his genius exalted, but to take care lest imagination hurry him beyond the bounds of nature. He holds diligence the mother of success; yet enjoins him, with great earnestness, not to read more than he can digest, and not to confuse his mind by pursuing studies of contrary tendencies. He tells him, that every man has his genius, and that Cicero could never be a poet. The boy retires illuminated, resolves to follow his genius, and to think how Milton would have thought; and *Minim* feasts upon his own beneficence till another day brings another pupil.

N^o LXII. SATURDAY, JUNE 23.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

AN opinion prevails almost universally in the world, that he who has money has every thing. This is not a modern paradox, or the tenet of a small and obscure sect, but a persuasion which appears to have operated upon most minds in all ages, and which is supported by authorities so numerous and so cogent, that nothing but long experience could have given me confidence to question it's truth.

But experience is the test by which all the philosophers of the present age agree that speculation must be tried; and I may be therefore allowed to doubt the power of money since I have been a long time rich, and have not yet found that riches can make me happy.

My father was a farmer, neither wealthy nor indigent, who gave me a better education than was suitable to my birth, because my uncle in the city designed me for his heir, and desired that I might be bred a gentleman. My uncle's wealth was the perpetual subject of conversation in the house; and when any little misfortune befell us, or any mortification dejected us, my father always exhorted me to hold up my head, for my uncle would never marry.

My uncle, indeed, kept his promise. Having his mind completely busied between his warehouse and the 'Change, he felt no tediousness of life, nor any want of domestick amusements. When my father died, he received me kindly; but, after a few months, finding no great pleasure in the conversation of each other, we parted, and he remitted me a small annuity, on which I lived a quiet and studious life, without any wish to grow great by the death of my benefactor.

But though I never suffered any malignant impatience to take hold on my mind, I could not forbear sometimes to imagine to myself the pleasure of being rich; and when I read of diversions and magnificence, resolved to try, when time should put the trial in my power, what pleasure they could afford.

My uncle, in the latter spring of his life, when his ruddy cheek and his firm

nerves promised him a long and healthy age, died of an apoplexy. His death gave me neither joy nor sorrow. He did me good, and I regarded him with gratitude; but I could not please him, and therefore could not love him.

He had the policy of little minds, who love to surprize; and having always represented his fortune as less than it was, had, I suppose, often gratified himself with thinking, how I should be delighted to find myself twice as rich as I expected. My wealth was such as exceeded all the schemes of expence which I had formed, and I soon began to expand my thoughts, and look round for some purchase of felicity.

The most striking effect of riches is the splendour of drets, which every man has observed to enforce respect, and facilitate reception; and my first desire was to be fine. I sent for a taylor who was employed by the nobility, and ordered such a suit of cloaths as I had often looked on with involuntary submission, and am ashamed to remember with what flutters of expectation I waited for the hour when I should issue forth in all the splendour of embroidery. The cloaths were brought, and for three days I observed many eyes turned towards me as I passed; but I felt myself obstructed in the common intercourse of civility, by an uneasy consciousness of my new appearance; as I thought myself more observed, I was more anxious about my mien and behaviour; and the mien which is formed by care is commonly ridiculous. A short time accustomed me to myself, and my dress was without pain, and without pleasure.

For a little while I tried to be a rake, but I began too late; and having by nature no turn for a frolick, was in great danger of ending in a drunkard. A fever, in which not one of my companions paid me a visit, gave me time for reflection. I found that there was no great pleasure in breaking windows and lying in the round-house; and resolved to associate no longer with those whom, though I had treated and bailed them, I could not make friends.

I then changed my measures, kept running horses, and had the comfort of
seeing

seeing my name very often in the news. I had a chefnut horfe, the grandfon of Childers, who won four plates and ten by-matches; and a bay filly, who carried off the five years old plate, and was expected to perform much greater exploits, when my groom broke her wind, because I happened to catch him selling oats for beer. This happiness was soon at an end; there was no pleasure when I loft, and when I won I could not much exalt myself by the virtues of my horfe. I grew afhamed of the company of jockey lords, and refolved to fpend no more of my time in the ftale.

It was now known that I had money, and would fpend it; and I paffed four

months in the company of architects, whose whole bufinefs was to perfuade me to build a houfe. I told them that I had more room than I wanted, but could not get rid of their importunities. A new plan was brought me every morning; till at laft my conftancy was overpowered, and I began to build. The happiness of building lafted but a little while; for though I love to fpend, I hate to be cheated; and I soon found, that to build is to be robbed.

How I proceed in the purfuit of happiness, you fhall hear when I find myself difpofed to write.

I am, Sir, &c.

TIM. RANGER.

Nº LXIII. SATURDAY, JUNE 30.

THE natural progress of the works of men is from rudeness to convenience, from convenience to elegance, and from elegance to nicety.

The first labour is enforced by necessity. The savage finds himself incommoded by heat and cold, by rain and wind; he shelters himself in the hollow of a rock, and learns to dig a cave where there was none before. He finds the sun and the wind excluded by the thicket; and when the accidents of the chase, or the convenience of pasturage leads him into more open places, he forms a thicket for himself, by planting stakes at proper distances, and laying branches from one to another.

The next gradation of skill and industry produces a house, closed with doors, and divided by partitions; and apartments are multiplied and disposed according to the various degrees of power or invention; improvement succeeds improvement, as he that is freed from a greater evil grows impatient of a less, till ease in time is advanced to pleasure.

The mind set free from the importunities of natural want, gains leisure to go in search of superfluous gratifications, and adds to the uses of habitation the delights of prospect. Then begins the reign of symmetry; orders of architecture are invented, and one part of the edifice is conformed to another, without any other reason than that the eye may not be offended.

The passage is very short from elegance to luxury. Ionick and Corin-

thian columns are soon succeeded by gilt cornices, inlaid floors, and petty ornaments, which shew rather the wealth than the taste of the possessor.

Language proceeds, like every thing else, through improvement to degeneracy. The rovers who first take possession of a country, having not many ideas, and those not nicely modified or discriminated, were contented, if by general terms and abrupt sentences they could make their thoughts known to one another: as life begins to be more regulated, and property to become limited, disputes must be decided, and claims adjusted; the differences of things are noted, and distinctness and propriety of expression become necessary. In time, happiness and plenty give rise to curiosity, and the sciences are cultivated for ease and pleasure; to the arts which are now to be taught, emulation soon adds the art of teaching; and the studious and ambitious contend, not only who shall think best, but who shall tell their thoughts in the most pleasing manner.

Then begin the arts of rhetoric and poetry, the regulation of figures, the selection of words, the modulation of periods, the graces of transition, the complication of clauses, and all the delicacies of style and subtilties of composition; useful while they advance perspicuity, and laudable while they increase pleasure; but easy to be refined by needless scrupulosity till they shall more embarrass the writer than assist the reader or delight him.

The

The first state is commonly antecedent to the practice of writing; the ignorant essays of imperfect diction pass away with the savage generation that uttered them. No nation can trace their language beyond the second period, and even of that it does not often happen that many monuments remain.

The fate of the English tongue is like that of others. We know nothing of the scanty jargon of our barbarous ancestors, but we have specimens of our language when it began to be adapted to civil and religious purposes, and find it such as might naturally be expected, artless and simple, unconnected and concise. The writers seem to have desired little more than to be understood, and perhaps seldom aspired to the praise of pleasing. Their verses were considered chiefly as memorial, and therefore did not differ from prose but by the measure or the rhyme.

In this state, varied a little according to the different purposes or abilities of writers, our language may be said to have continued to the time of Gower, whom Chaucer calls his master; and

who, however obscured by his scholar's popularity, seems justly to claim the honour which has been hitherto denied him, of shewing his countrymen that something more was to be desired, and that English verse might be exalted into poetry.

From the time of Gower and Chaucer, the English writers have studied elegance, and advanced their language; by successive improvements, to as much harmony as it can easily receive, and as much copiousness as human knowledge has hitherto required. These advances have not been made at all times with the same diligence or the same success. Negligence has suspended the course of improvement, or affectation turned it aside; time has elapsed with little change, or change has been made without amendment. But elegance has been long kept in view with attention as near to constancy as life permits, till every man now endeavours to excel others in accuracy, or outshine them in splendor of style; and the danger is, lest care should too soon pass to affectation.

Nº LXIV. SATURDAY, JULY 7.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,
AS Nature has made every man desirous of happiness, I flatter myself, that you and your readers cannot but feel some curiosity to know the sequel of my story: for though, by trying the different schemes of pleasure, I have yet found nothing in which I could finally acquiesce; yet the narrative of my attempts will not be wholly without use, since we always approach nearer to truth as we detect more and more varieties of error.

When I had sold my racers, and put the orders of architecture out of my head, my next resolution was to be a *fine gentleman*. I frequented the polite coffee-houses, grew acquainted with all the men of humour, and gained the right of bowing familiarly to half the nobility. In this new scene of life my great labour was to learn to laugh. I had been used to consider laughter as the effect of merriment, but I soon learned that it is one of the arts of adulation, and, from laughing only to shew that I was pleas-

ed, I now began to laugh when I wished to please. This was at first very difficult. I sometimes heard the story with dull indifference, and, not exalting myself to merriment by due gradations, burst out suddenly into an awkward noise, which was not always favourably interpreted. Sometimes I was behind the rest of the company, and lost the grace of laughing by delay; and sometimes, when I began at the right time, was deficient in loudness or in length. But, by diligent imitation of the best models, I attained at last such flexibility of muscles that I was always a welcome auditor of a story, and got the reputation of a good-natured fellow.

This was something; but much more was to be done, that I might be universally allowed to be a *fine gentleman*. I appeared at court on all publick days, betted at gaming-tables, and played at all the routs of eminence. I went every night to the opera, took a fidler of disputed merit under my protection, became the head of a musical faction, and had sometimes concerts at my own house.

house. I once thought to have attained the highest rank of elegance, by taking a foreign singer into keeping. But my favourite idler contrived to be arrested on the night of the concert, for a finer suit of cloaths than I had ever presumed to wear, and I lost all the fame of patronage by refusing to bail him.

My next ambition was to sit for my picture. I spent a whole winter in going from painter to painter, to bespeak a whole length of one, and a half length of another; I talked of nothing but attitudes, draperies, and proper lights; took my friends to see the pictures after every sitting; heard every day of a wonderful performer in crayons and miniature, and sent my pictures to be copied; was told by the judges that they were not like, and was recommended to other artists. At length, being not able to please my friends, I grew less pleased myself, and at last resolved to think no more about it.

It was impossible to live in total idleness; and, wandering about in search of something to do, I was invited to a weekly meeting of virtuosos, and felt myself instantaneously seized with an unextinguishable ardour for all natural curiosities. I ran from auction to auction, became a critic in shells and fossils, bought a *horius fecus* of inestimable value, and purchased a secret art of preserving insects, which made my collection the envy of the other philosophers. I found this pleasure mingled with much vexation. All the faults of my life were for nine months circulated through the town with the most active malignity, because I happened to catch a moth of peculiar variegation; and because I once out-bid all the lovers of shells and carried off a *Nautilus*, it was hinted that the validity of my uncle's will ought to be disputed. I will not deny that I was very proud both of the moth and of the shell, and gratified myself with the

envy of my companions, perhaps more than became a benevolent being. But in time I grew weary of being hated for that which produced no advantage, gave my shells to children that wanted playthings, and suppressed the art of drying butterflies, because I would not tempt Idleness and Cruelty to kill them.

I now began to feel life tedious, and wished to store myself with friends, with whom I might grow old in the interchange of benevolence. I had observed that popularity was most easily gained by an open table, and therefore hired a French cook, furnished my sideboard with great magnificence, filled my cellar with wines of pompous appellations, bought every thing that was dear before it was good, and invited all those who were most famous for judging of a dinner. In three weeks my cook gave me warning, and, upon enquiry, told me that Lord Queasy, who dined with me the day before, had sent him an offer of double wages. My pride prevailed, I raised his wages, and invited his lordship to another feast. I love plain meat, and was therefore soon weary of spreading a table of which I could not partake. I found that my guests, when they went away, criticised their entertainment, and censured my profusion; my cook thought himself necessary, and took upon him the direction of the house; and I could not rid myself of flatterers, or break from slavery, but by shutting up my house, and declaring my resolution to live in lodgings.

After all this, tell me, dear Idler, what I must do next. I have health, I have money, and hope that I have understanding; yet, with all these, I have never yet been able to pass a single day which I did not wish at an end before sun-set. Tell me, dear Idler, what I shall do. I am your humble servant,

TIM. RANGER.

Nº XLV. SATURDAY, JULY 14.

THE sequel of Clarendon's History, at last happily published, is an accession to English literature equally agreeable to the admirers of elegance and the lovers of truth; many doubtful facts may now be ascertained, and many

questions, after long debate, may be determined by decisive authority. He that records transactions in which himself was engaged, has not only an opportunity of knowing innumerable particulars which escape spectators, but has his natural

natural powers exalted by that ardour which always rises at the remembrance of our own importance, and by which every man is enabled to relate his own actions better than another's.

The difficulties through which this work has struggled into light, and the delays with which our hopes have been long mocked, naturally lead the mind to the consideration of the common fate of posthumous compositions.

He who sees himself surrounded by admirers, and whose vanity is hourly feasted with all the luxuries of studied praise, is easily persuaded that his influence will be extended beyond his life; that they who cringe in his presence will reverence his memory; and that those who are proud to be numbered among his friends, will endeavour to vindicate his choice by zeal for his reputation.

With hopes like these, to the executors of Swift was committed the history of the last years of Queen Ann, and to those of Pope the works which remained unprinted in his closet. The performances of Pope were burnt by those whom he had perhaps selected from all mankind as most likely to publish them; and the history had likewise perished, had not a straggling transcript fallen into busy hands.

The papers left in the closet of Peiresc supplied his heirs with a whole winter's fuel; and many of the labours of the learned Bishop Lloyd were consumed in the kitchen of his descendants.

Some works, indeed, have escaped total destruction, but yet have had reason to lament the fate of orphans exposed to the frauds of unfaithful guardians. How Hale would have borne the mutilations which his *Pleas of the Crown* have suffered from the editor, they who know his character will easily conceive.

The original copy of Burnet's History, though promised to some publick library*, has never been given; and who then can prove the fidelity of the publication, when the authenticity of Clarendon's History, though printed with the sanction of one of the first universities of the world, had not an unexpected manuscript been happily discovered, would,

with the help of factious credulity, have been brought into question by the two lowest of all human beings, a scribbler for a party, and a commissioner of excise?

Vanity is often no less mischievous than negligence or dishonesty. He that possesses a valuable manuscript, hopes to raise it's esteem by concealment, and delights in the distinction which he imagines himself to obtain by keeping the key of a treasure which he neither uses nor imparts. From him it falls to some other owner, less vain but more negligent, who considers it as useless lumber, and rids himself of the incumbrance.

Yet there are some works which the authors must consign unpublished to posterity, however uncertain be the event, however hopeless be the trust. He that writes the history of his own times, if he adheres steadily to truth, will write that which his own times will not easily endure. He must be content to reposit his book till all private passions shall cease, and love and hatred give way to curiosity.

But many leave the labours of half their life to their executors and to chance, because they will not send them abroad unfinished; and are unable to finish them, having prescribed to themselves such a degree of exactness as human diligence can scarcely attain. 'Lloyd,' says Burnet, 'did not lay out his learning with the same diligence as he laid it in.' He was always hesitating and enquiring, raising objections and removing them, and waiting for clearer light and fuller discovery. Baker, after many years past in biography, left his manuscripts to be buried in a library, because that was imperfect which could never be perfected.

Of these learned men, let those who aspire to the same praise, imitate the diligence, and avoid the scrupulosity. Let it be always remembered that life is short, that knowledge is endless, and that many doubts deserve not to be cleared. Let those whom nature and study have qualified to teach mankind, tell us what they have learned while they are yet able to tell it, and trust their reputation only to themselves.

* It would be proper to reposit, in some publick place, the manuscript of Clarendon, which has not escaped all suspicion of unfaithful publication.

N° LXVI. SATURDAY, JULY 21.

NO complaint is more frequently repeated among the learned, than that of the waste made by time among the labours of Antiquity. Of those who once filled the civilized world with their renown, nothing is now left but their names, which are left only to raise desires that never can be satisfied, and sorrow which never can be comforted.

Had all the writings of the ancients been faithfully delivered down from age to age, had the Alexandrian library been spared, and the Palatine repositories remained unimpaired, how much might we have known of which we are now doomed to be ignorant! how many laborious enquiries, and dark conjectures, how many collations of broken hints and mutilated passages, might have been spared! We should have known the successions of princes, the revolutions of empire, the actions of the great, and opinions of the wise, the laws and constitutions of every state, and the arts by which public grandeur and happiness are acquired and preserved; we should have traced the progress of life, seen colonies from distant regions take possession of European deserts, and troops of savages settled into communities by the desire of keeping what they had acquired; we should have traced the gradations of civility, and travelled upwards to the original of things by the light of history, till in remoter times it had glimmered in fable, and at last sunk into darkness.

If the works of imagination had been less diminished, it is likely that all future times might have been supplied with inexhaustible amusement by the fictions of Antiquity. The tragedies of Sophocles and Euripides would have shewn all the stronger passions in all their diversities; and the comedies of Menander would have furnished all the maxims of domestic life. Nothing would have been necessary to moral wisdom but to have studied these great masters, whose knowledge would have guided doubt, and whose authority would have silenced cavils.

Such are the thoughts that rise in every student, when his curiosity is eluded, and his searches are frustrated; yet

it may perhaps be doubted, whether our complaints are not sometimes inconsiderate, and whether we do not imagine more evil than we feel. Of the Ancients, enough remains to excite our emulation, and direct our endeavours. Many of the works which time has left us, we know to have been those that were most esteemed, and which Antiquity itself considered as models; so that, having the originals, we may without much regret lose the imitations. The obscurity which the want of contemporary writers often produces, only darkens single passages, and those commonly of slight importance. The general tendency of every piece may be known; and though that diligence deserves praise which leaves nothing unexamined, yet it's miscarriages are not much to be lamented; for the most useful truths are always universal, and unconnected with accidents and customs.

Such is the general conspiracy of human nature against contemporary merit, that if we had inherited from antiquity enough to afford employment for the laborious, and amusement for the idle, I know not what room would have been left for modern genius or modern industry; almost every subject would have been pre-occupied, and every style would have been fixed by a precedent from which few would have ventured to depart. Every writer would have had a rival, whose superiority was already acknowledged, and to whose fame his work would, even before it was seen, be marked out for a sacrifice.

We see how little the united experience of mankind has been able to add to the heroic characters displayed by Homer, and how few incidents the fertile imagination of modern Italy has yet produced, which may not be found in the Iliad and Odyssey. It is likely, that if all the works of the Athenian philosophers had been extant, Malbranche and Locke would have been condemned to be silent readers of the ancient metaphysicians; and it is apparent, that if the old writers had all remained, the Idler could not have written a dissertation on the loss.

Nº LXVII. SATURDAY, JULY 28.

TO THE IDLER.

STR,

IN the observations which you have made on the various opinions and pursuits of mankind, you must often, in literary conversations, have met with men who consider Dissipation as the great enemy of the intellect; and maintain, that in proportion as the student keeps himself within the bounds of a settled plan, he will more certainly advance in science.

This opinion is, perhaps, generally true; yet, when we contemplate the inquisitive nature of the human mind, and it's perpetual impatience of all restraint, it may be doubted whether the faculties may not be contracted by confining the attention; and whether it may not sometimes be proper to risk the certainty of little for the chance of much. Acquisitions of knowledge, like blazes of genius, are often fortuitous. Those who had proposed to themselves a methodical course of reading, light by accident on a new book, which seizes their thoughts and kindles their curiosity, and opens an unexpected prospect, to which the way which they had prescribed to themselves would never have conducted them.

To enforce and illustrate my meaning, I have sent you a journal of three days employment, found among the papers of a late intimate acquaintance; who, as will plainly appear, was a man of vast designs, and of vast performances, though he sometimes designed one thing and performed another. I allow that the Spectator's inimitable productions of this kind may well discourage all subsequent journalists; but, as the subject of this is different from that of any which the Spectator has given us, I leave it to you to publish or suppress it.

Mem. The following three days I propose to give up to reading; and intend, after all the delays which have obstructed themselves upon me, to finish my *Essay on the Extent of the Mental Powers*; to revise my *Treatise on Logick*; to begin the *Epick* which I have long projected; to proceed in my perusal of the *Scriptures*

with *Grotius's Comment*; and at my leisure to regale myself with the works of classics, ancient and modern, and to finish my *Ode to Astronomy*.

Monday.] Designed to rise at six, but, by my servant's laziness, my fire was not lighted before eight, when I dropped into a slumber that lasted till nine; at which time I rose, and, after breakfast, at ten sat down to study, proposing to begin upon my *Essay*; but finding occasion to consult a passage in Plato, was absorbed in the perusal of the Republic till twelve. I had neglected to forbid company, and now enters Tom Careless, who after half an hour's chat, insisted upon my going with him to enjoy an absurd character, that he had appointed, by an advertisement, to meet him at a particular coffee-house. After we had for some time entertained ourselves with him, we sallied out, designing each to repair to his home; but, as it fell out, coming up in the street to a man, whose steel by his side declared him a butcher, we overheard him opening an address to a genteelish sort of young lady, whom he walked with—
‘Miss, though your father is master of a coal-lighter, and you will be a great fortune, ’tis true; yet I wish I may be cut into quarters if it is not only love, and not lucre of gain, that is my motive for offering terms of marriage.’
As this lover proceeded in his speech, he misled us the length of three streets, in admiration at the unlimited power of the tender passion, that could soften even the heart of a butcher. We then adjourned to a tavern, and from thence to one of the public gardens, where I was regaled with a most amusing variety of men possessing great talents, so discoloured by affectation, that they only made them eminently ridiculous; shallow things, who, by continual dissipation, had annihilated the few ideas nature had given them, and yet were celebrated for wonderful pretty gentlemen; young ladies extolled for their wit, because they were handsome; illiterate empty women as well as men, in high life, admired for their knowledge, from their being resolutely positive; and women

men

even of real understanding so far from pleasing the polite million, that they frightened them away, and were left solitary. When we quitted this entertaining scene, Tom pressed me, irresistibly, to sup with him. I reached home at twelve, and then reflected, that though indeed I had, by remarking various characters, improved my insight into human nature, yet still I had neglected the studies proposed, and accordingly took up my *Treatise on Logick*, to give it the intended revival, but found my spirits too much agitated, and could not forbear a few satyrical lines, under the title of *The Evening's Walk*.

‘*Tuesday.*’] At breakfast, seeing my *Ode to Astronomy* lying on my desk, I was struck with a train of ideas, that I thought might contribute to it’s improvement. I immediately rang my bell to forbid all visitors, when my servant opened the door, with—‘Sir, Mr. Jeffery Gape.’ My cup dropped out of my hand, and my poem out of the other. I could scarce ask him to sit; he told me he was going to walk, but as there was a likelihood to rain, he would sit with me; he said, he intended at first to have called at Mr. Vacant’s, but as he had not seen me a great while, he did not mind coming out of his way to wait on me: I made him a bow, but thanks for the favour stuck in my throat. I asked him if he had been to the coffee-house. He replied two hours.

‘Under the oppression of this dull interruption, I sat looking wishfully at the clock; for which, to increase my satisfaction, I had chosen the inscription, *Art is long, and Life is short*; exchanging questions and answers at long intervals, and not without some hints that the weather-glass promised fair weather. At half an hour after three he told me he would trespass on me for a dinner, and desired me to send to his house for a bundle of papers, about inclosing a common upon his estate, which he would read to me in the evening. I declared myself busy, and Mr. Gape went away.

‘Having dined to compose my chagrin, I took up Virgil, and several other classics, but could not calm my mind, or proceed in my scheme. At about five I laid my hand on a Bible that lay on my table, at first with coldness and insensibility; but was imperceptibly engaged in a close attention to it’s sublime morality, and felt my heart expanded by

warm philanthropy, and exalted to dignity of sentiment; I then censured my too great solicitude, and my disgust conceived at my acquaintance, who had been so far from designing to offend, that he only meant to shew kindness and respect. In this strain of mind I wrote *An Essay on Benevolence*, and *An Elegy on Sublunary Disappointments*. When I had finished these, at eleven, I supped, and recollected how little I had adhered to my plan, and almost questioned the possibility of pursuing any settled and uniform design; however, I was not so far persuaded of the truth of these suggestions, but that I resolved to try once more at my scheme. As I observed the moon shining through my window, from a calm and bright sky, spangled with innumerable stars, I indulged a pleasing meditation on the splendid scene, and finished my *Ode to Astronomy*.

‘*Wednesday.*’] Rose at seven, and employed three hours in perusal of the *Scriptures* with *Grotius’s Comment*; and after breakfast fell into meditation concerning my projected *Epick*; and being in some doubt as to the particular lives of some heroes, whom I proposed to celebrate, I consulted Bayle and Moreri, and was engaged two hours in examining various lives and characters, but then resolved to go to my employment. When I was seated at my desk, and began to feel the glowing succession of poetical ideas, my servant brought me a letter from a lawyer, requiring my instant attendance at Gray’s Inn for half an hour. I went full of vexation, and was involved in business till eight at night; and then, being too much fatigued to study, supped, and went to bed.

Here my friend’s journal concludes; which perhaps is pretty much a picture of the manner in which many prosecute their studies. I therefore resolved to send it you, imagining, that if you think it worthy of appearing in your paper, some of your readers may receive entertainment by recognizing a resemblance between my friend’s conduct and their own. It must be left to the Idler accurately to ascertain the proper methods of advancing in literature; but this one position, deducible from what has been said above, may, I think, be reasonably asserted, that he who finds himself strongly attracted to any particular study, though it may happen to be out of his

propose scheme, if it is not trifling or vicious, had better continue his application to it, since it is likely that he will, with much more ease and expedition, at-

tain that which a warm inclination stimulates him to pursue, than that at which a prescribed law compels him to toil. I am, &c.

Nº LXVIII. SATURDAY, AUGUST 4.

AMONG the studies which have exercised the ingenious and the learned for more than three centuries, none has been more diligently or more successfully cultivated than the art of Translation; by which the impediments which bar the way to science are, in some measure, removed, and the multiplicity of languages becomes less incommodious.

Of every other kind of writing the ancients have left us models which all succeeding ages have laboured to imitate; but Translation may justly be claimed by the moderns as their own. In the first ages of the world instruction was commonly oral, and learning traditional, and what was not written could not be translated. When alphabetical writing made the conveyance of opinions and the transmission of events more easy and certain, literature did not flourish in more than one country at once, or distant nations had little commerce with each other; and those few whom curiosity sent abroad in quest of improvement, delivered their acquisitions in their own manner, desirous perhaps to be considered as the inventors of that which they had learned from others.

The Greeks for a time travelled into Egypt, but they translated no books from the Egyptian language; and when the Macedonians had overthrown the empire of Persia, the countries that became subject to Grecian dominion studied only the Grecian literature. The books of the conquered nations, if they had any among them, sunk into oblivion; Greece considered herself as the mistress if not as the parent of arts, her language contained all that was supposed to be known, and, except the sacred writings of the Old Testament, I know not that the library of Alexandria adopted any thing from a foreign tongue.

The Romans confessed themselves the scholars of the Greeks, and do not appear to have expected, what has since happened, that the ignorance of succeeding ages would prefer them to their

teachers. Every man who in Rome aspired to the praise of literature, thought it necessary to learn Greek, and had no need of versions when they could study the originals. Translation, however, was not wholly neglected. Dramatick poems could be understood by the people in no language but their own, and the Romans were sometimes entertained with the tragedies of Euripides and the comedies of Menander. Other works were sometimes attempted; in an old scholiast there is mention of a Latin Iliad, and we have not wholly lost Tully's version of the poem of Aratus; but it does not appear that any man grew eminent by interpreting another; and perhaps it was more frequent to translate for exercise or amusement, than for fame.

The Arabs were the first nation who felt the ardour of Translation; when they had subdued the eastern provinces of the Greek empire, they found their captives wiser than themselves, and made haste to relieve their wants by imparted knowledge. They discovered that many might grow wise by the labour of a few, and that improvements might be made with speed, when they had the knowledge of former ages in their own language. They therefore made haste to lay hold on medicine and philosophy, and turned their chief Authors into Arabic. Whether they attempted the poets is not known; their literary zeal was vehement, but it was short, and probably expired before they had time to add the arts of elegance to those of necessity.

The study of ancient literature was interrupted in Europe by the irruption of the northern nations, who subverted the Roman empire, and erected new kingdoms with new languages. It is not strange, that such confusion should suspend literary attention; those who lost, and those who gained dominion, had immediate difficulties to encounter, and immediate miseries to redress; and had little leisure, amidst the violence of war, the trepidation of flight, the distresses of forced migration, or the tumults

mults of unsettled conquest, to enquire after speculative truth, to enjoy the amusement of imaginary adventures, to know the history of former ages, or study the events of any other lives. But no sooner had this chaos of dominion sunk into order, than learning began again to flourish in the calm of peace. When life and possessions were secure, convenience and enjoyment were soon sought, learning was found the highest gratification of the mind, and Translation be-

came one of the means by which it was imparted.

At last, by a concurrence of many causes, the European world was roused from it's lethargy; those arts which had been long obscurely studied in the gloom of monasteries became the general favourites of mankind; every nation vied with it's neighbour for the prize of learning; the epidemical emulation spread from south to north, and Curiosity and Translation found their way to Britain.

Nº LXIX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 11.

HE that reviews the progress of English literature, will find that Translation was very early cultivated among us, but that some principles, either wholly erroneous or too far extended, hindered our success from being always equal to our diligence.

Chaucer, who is generally considered as the father of our poetry, has left a version of *Boetius on the Comforts of Philosophy*, the book which seems to have been the favourite of the middle ages, which had been translated into Saxon by King Alfred, and illustrated with a copious *Comment* ascribed to Aquinas. It may be supposed that Chaucer would apply more than common attention to an author of so much celebrity, yet has attempted nothing higher than a version strictly literal, and has degraded the poetical parts to prose, that the constraint of versification might not obstruct his zeal for fidelity.

Caxton taught us Typography about the year 1474. The first book printed in English was a translation. Caxton was both the translator and printer of the *Destruction of Troye*, a book which, in that infancy of learning, was considered as the best account of the fabulous ages, and which, though now driven out of notice by authors of no greater use or value, still continued to be read in Caxton's English to the beginning of the present century.

Caxton proceeded as he began, and, except the poems of Gower and Chaucer, printed nothing but Translations from the French, in which the original is so scrupulously followed, that they afford us little knowledge of our own language; though the words are English, the phrase is foreign.

As learning advanced, new works were adopted into our language, but I think with little improvement of the art of Translation, though foreign nations and other languages offered us models of a better method; till in the age of Elizabeth we began to find that greater liberty was necessary to elegance, and that elegance was necessary to general reception; some essays were then made upon the Italian poets which deserve the praise and gratitude of posterity.

But the old practice was not suddenly forsaken; Holland filled the nation with literal Translation, and, what is yet more strange, the same exactness was obstinately practised in the versions of the poets. This absurd labour of construing into rhyme was countenanced by Jonson in his version of Horace; and whether it be that more men have learning than genius, or that the endeavours of that time were more directed towards knowledge than delight, the accuracy of Jonson found more imitators than the elegance of Fairfax; and May, Sandys, and Holiday, confined themselves to the toil of rendering line for line, not indeed with equal felicity, for May and Sandys were poets, and Holiday only a scholar and a critic.

Feltham appears to consider it as the established law of poetical Translation, that the lines should be neither more nor fewer than those of the original; and so long had this prejudice prevailed, that Denham praises Fanshawe's version of Guarini as the example of a *new and noble way*, as the first attempt to break the boundaries of custom and assert the natural freedom of the Muse.

In the general emulation of wit and genius which the festivity of the Restoration

ration produced, the poets shook off their constraint, and considered Translation as no longer confined to servile closeness. But reformation is seldom the work of pure virtue or unassisted reason. Translation was improved more by accident than conviction. The writers of the foregoing age had at least learning equal to their genius, and being often more able to explain the sentiments or illustrate the allusions of the ancients, than to exhibit their graces and transfuse their spirit, were perhaps willing sometimes to conceal their want of poetry by profusion of literature, and therefore translated literally, that their fidelity might shelter their inspidity or harshness. The wits of Charles's time had seldom more than slight and superficial views, and their care was to hide their want of learning behind the colours of a gay imagination; they therefore translated always with freedom, sometimes with licentiousness, and perhaps expected that their readers should accept spiriteliness for knowledge, and consider igno-

rance and mistake as the impatience and negligence of a mind too rapid to stop at difficulties, and too elevated to descend to minuteness.

Thus was Translation made more easy to the writer, and more delightful to the reader; and there is no wonder if ease and pleasure have found their advocates. The paraphrastick liberties have been almost universally admitted; and Sherrbourn, whose learning was eminent, and who had no need of any excuse to pass slightly over obscurities, is the only writer who in later times has attempted to justify or revive the ancient severity.

There is undoubtedly a mean to be observed. Dryden saw very early that closeness best preserved an author's sense, and that freedom best exhibited his spirit; he therefore will deserve the highest praise, who can give a representation at once faithful and pleasing, who can convey the same thoughts with the same graces, and who when he translates changes nothing but the language,

Nº LXX. SATURDAY, AUGUST 18.

FEW faults of style, whether real or imaginary, excite the malignity of a more numerous class of readers, than the use of hard words.

If an author be supposed to involve his thoughts in voluntary obscurity, and to obstruct, by unnecessary difficulties, a mind eager in pursuit of truth; if he writes not to make others learned, but to boast the learning which he possesses himself, and wishes to be admired rather than understood, he counteracts the first end of writing, and justly suffers the utmost severity of censure, or the more afflictive severity of neglect.

But words are only hard to those who do not understand them, and the critic ought always to enquire, whether he is incommoded by the fault of the writer, or by his own.

Every author does not write for every reader; many questions are such as the illiterate part of mankind can have neither interest nor pleasure in discussing, and which therefore it would be an useless endeavour to level with common minds, by tiresome circumlocutions or laborious explanations; and many sub-

jects of general use may be treated in a different manner, as the book is intended for the learned or the ignorant. Diffusion and explication are necessary to the instruction of those who, being neither able nor accustomed to think for themselves, can learn only what is expressly taught; but they who can form parallels, discover consequences, and multiply conclusions, are best pleased with involution of argument and compression of thought; they desire only to receive the seeds of knowledge which they may branch out by their own power, to have the way to truth pointed out which they can then follow without a guide.

The Guardian directs one of his pupils to *think with the wise, but speak with the vulgar*. This is a precept specious enough, but not always practicable. Difference of thoughts will produce difference of language. He that thinks with more extent than another will want words of larger meaning; he that thinks with more subtilty will seek for terms of more nice discrimination; and where is the wonder, since words

are

but the images of things, that he who never knew the originals should not know the copies?

Yet vanity inclines us to find faults any where rather than in ourselves. He that reads and grows no wiser, seldom suspects his own deficiency: but complains of hard words and obscure sentences, and asks why books are written which cannot be understood.

Among the hard words which are no longer to be used, it has been long the custom to number terms of art. 'Every man,' says Swift, 'is more able to explain the subject of an art than it's professors; a farmer will tell you, in two words that he has broken his leg; but a surgeon, after a long discourse, shall leave you as ignorant as you were before.' This could only have been said by such an exact observer of life in gratification of malignity, or in ostentation of acuteness. Every hour produces instances of the necessity of terms of art. Mankind could never conspire in uniform affectation; it is not but by necessity that every science and every trade has it's peculiar language. They that content themselves with general ideas may rest in general terms; but those whose studies or employments force them upon closer inspection, must have names for particular parts, and words by which they may express various modes of combination, such as none but themselves have occasion to consider.

Artists are indeed sometimes ready to suppose that none can be strangers to words to which themselves are familiar, talk to an incidental enquirer as they talk to one another, and make their knowledge ridiculous by injudicious obstruction. An art cannot be taught but

by it's proper terms, but it is not always necessary to teach the art.

That the vulgar express their thoughts clearly is far from true; and what perspicuity can be found among them proceeds not from the easiness of their language, but the shallowness of their thoughts. He that sees a building as a common spectator, contents himself with relating that it is great or little, mean or splendid, lofty or low; all these words are intelligible and common, but they convey no distinct or limited ideas; if he attempts, without the terms of architecture, to delineate the parts, or enumerate the ornaments, his narration at once becomes unintelligible. The terms, indeed, generally displease, because they are understood by few; but they are little understood only because few, that look upon an edifice, examine it's parts, or analyse it's columns into their members.

The state of every other art is the same; as it is cursorily surveyed or accurately examined, different forms of expression become proper. In morality it is one thing to discuss the niceties of the casuist, and another to direct the practice of common life. In agriculture, he that instructs the farmer to plough and sow, may convey his notions without the words which he would find necessary in explaining to philosophers the process of vegetation; and if he, who has nothing to do but to be honest by the shortest way, will perplex his mind with subtle speculations; or if he whose task is to reap and thresh will not be contented without examining the evolution of the seed and circulation of the sap, the writers whom either shall consult are very little to be blamed, though it should sometimes happen that they are read in vain.

N° LXXI. SATURDAY, AUGUST 25.

DICK Shifter was born in Cheap-side, and having passed reputation through all the classes of St. Paul's school, has been for some years a student in the Temple. He is of opinion that intense application dulls the faculties, and thinks it necessary to temper the severity of the law by books that engage the mind but do not fatigue it. He has therefore made a copious collection of plays, poems, and romances, to

which he has recourse when he fancies himself tired with statutes and reports, and he seldom enquires very nicely whether he is weary or idle.

Dick has received from his favourite authors very strong impressions of a country life; and though his furthest excursions have been to Greenwich on one side, and Chelsea on the other, he has talked for several years, with great pomp of language and elevation of sentiments,

timents, about a state too high for contempt and too low for envy, about homely quiet and blameless simplicity, pastoral delights and rural innocence.

His friends who had estates in the country often invited him to pass the summer among them, but something or other had always hindered him; and he considered, that to reside in the house of another man, was to incur a kind of dependence inconsistent with that laxity of life which he had imagined as the chief good.

This summer he resolved to be happy, and procured a lodging to be taken for him at a solitary house, situated about thirty miles from London, on the banks of a small river, with corn fields before it, and a hill on each side covered with wood. He concealed the place of his retirement that none might violate his obscurity, and promised himself many a happy day when he should hide himself among the trees, and contemplate the tumults and vexations of the town.

He stepped into the post-chaise with his heart beating and his eyes sparkling, was conveyed through many varieties of delightful prospects, saw hills and meadows, corn fields and pasture, succeed each other, and for four hours charged none of his poets with fiction or exaggeration. He was now within six miles of happiness, when having never felt so much agitation before, he began to wish his journey at an end, and the last hour was passed in changing his posture, and quarrelling with his driver.

An hour may be tedious, but cannot be long; he at length alighted at his new dwelling, and was received as he expected; he looked round upon the hills and rivulets, but his joints were stiff and his muscles sore, and his first request was to see his bed-chamber.

He rested well, and ascribed the soundness of his sleep to the stillness of the country. He expected from that time nothing but nights of quiet and days of rapture; and, as soon as he had risen, wrote an account of his new state to one of his friends in the Temple.

DEAR FRANK,

I Never pitied thee before. I am now, as I could wish every man of wisdom and virtue to be, in the regions of calm content and placid meditation; with all the beauties of nature soliciting my no-

tice, and all the diversities of pleasure courting my acceptance; the birds are chirping in the hedges, and the flowers blooming in the mead; the breeze is whistling in the woods, and the sun dancing on the water. I can now say with truth, that a man capable of enjoying the purity of happiness, is never more busy than in his hours of leisure, nor ever less solitary than in a place of solitude.

I am dear Frank, &c.

When he had sent away this letter, he walked into the wood with some inconvenience from the furze that pricked his legs, and the briars that scratched his face; he at last sat down under a tree, and heard with great delight a shower, by which he was not wet, rattling among the branches: 'This,' said he, 'is the true image of obscurity; we hear of troubles and commotions, but never feel them.'

His amusement did not overpower the calls of nature, and he therefore went back to order his dinner. He knew that the country produces whatever is eaten or drunk, and imagining that he was now at the source of luxury, resolved to indulge himself with dainties which he supposed might be procured at a price next to nothing, if any price at all was expected; and intended to amaze the rusticks with his generosity, by paying more than they would ask. Of twenty dishes which he named, he was amazed to find that scarce one was to be had, and heard with astonishment and indignation, that all the fruits of the earth were sold at a higher price than in the streets of London.

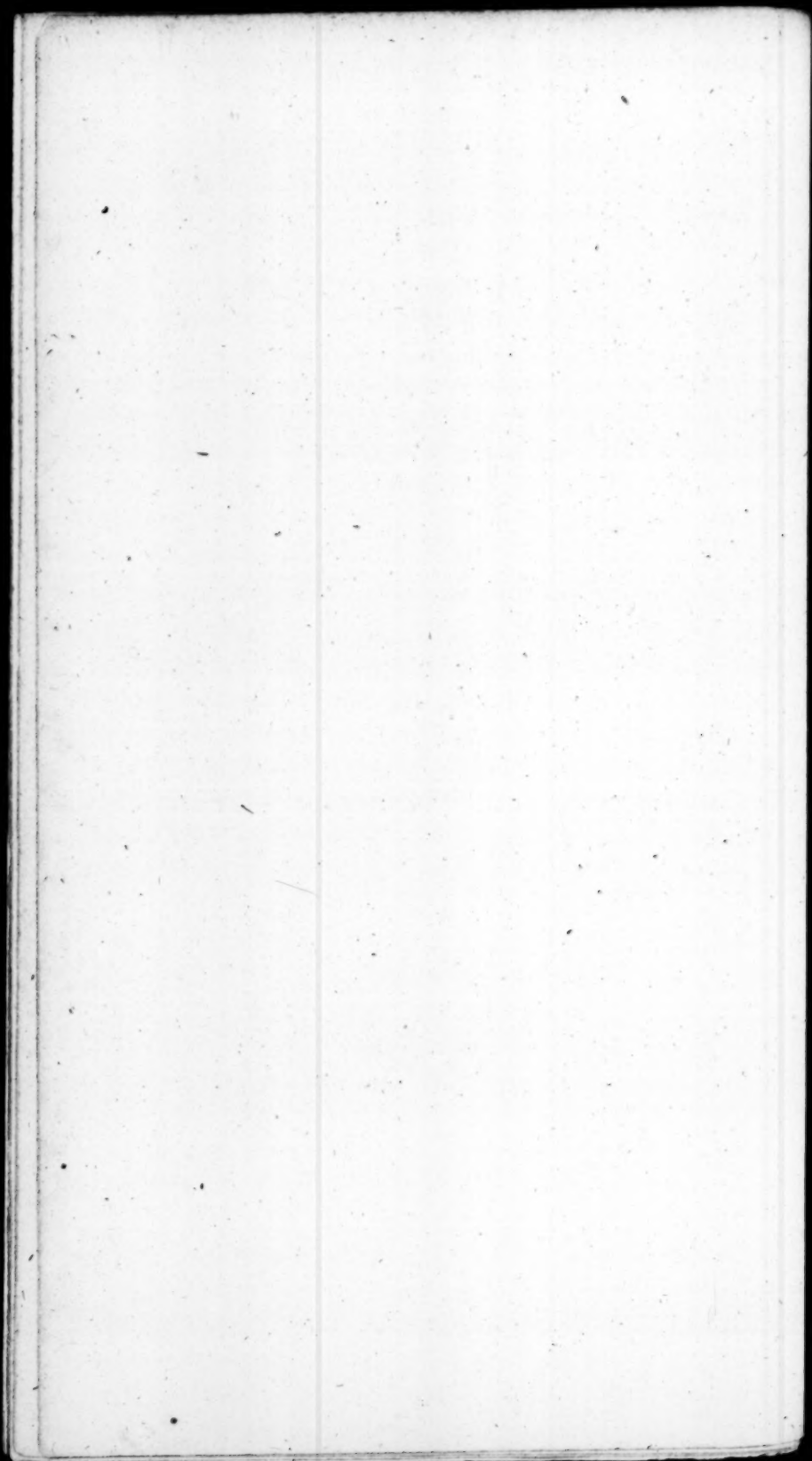
His meal was short and sullen, and he retired again to his tree, to enquire how dearnefs could be consistent with abundance, or how fraud should be practised by simplicity. He was not satisfied with his own speculations, and returning home early in the evening, went a while from window to window, and found that he wanted something to do.

He enquired for a news-paper, and was told that farmers never minded news, but that they could send for it from the ale-house. A messenger was dispatched, who ran away at full speed, but loitered an hour behind the hedge, and at last coming back with his hat, purposely



J. H. B. engraving del.

Heath sculp.



purposely demired, instead of expressing the gratitude which Mr. Shifter expected for the bounty of a shilling, said that the night was wet, and the way dirty, and he hoped that his worship would not think it much to give him half-a-crown.

Dick now went to bed with some abatement of his expectations; but sleep, I know not how, revives our hopes and rekindles our desires. He rose early in the morning, surveyed the landscape, and was pleased. He walked out, and passed from field to field, without observing any beaten path, and wondered that he had not seen the shepherdesses dancing, nor heard the swains piping to their flocks.

At last he saw some reapers and harvest-women at dinner. 'Here,' said he, 'are the true Arcadians; and advanced courteously towards them, as afraid of confusing them by the dignity of his presence. They acknowledged his superiority by no other token than that of asking him for something to drink. He imagined that he had now purchased the privilege of discourse, and began to descend to familiar questions, endeavouring to accommodate his discourse to the grossness of rustick understandings. The clowns soon found that he did not know wheat from rye, and began to despise him; one of the boys, by pretending to shew him a bird's nest, decoyed him into a ditch, and one of the wenches fold him a bargain.

This walk had given him no great

pleasure, but he hoped to find other rusticks less coarse of manners, and less mischievous of disposition. Next morning he was accosted by an attorney, who told him, that unless he made Farmer Dobson satisfaction for trampling his grass, he had orders to indict him. Shifter was offended, but not terrified; and telling the attorney that he was himself a lawyer, talked so volubly of pettifoggers and barrators, that he drove him away.

Finding his walks thus interrupted, he was inclined to ride; and being pleased with the appearance of a horse that was grazing in a neighbouring meadow, enquired the owner, who warranted him sound, and would not sell him, but that he was too fine for a plain man. Dick paid down the price, and riding out to enjoy the evening, fell with his new horse into a ditch; they got out with difficulty, and as he was going to mount again, a countryman looked at the horse, and perceived him to be blind. Dick went to the seller, and demanded back his money; but was told, that a man who rented his ground must do the best for himself; that his landlord had his rent though the year was barren; and that, whether horses had eyes or no, he should sell them to the highest bidder.

Shifter now began to be tired with rustick simplicity, and on the fifth day took possession again of his chambers, and bade farewell to the regions of calm content and placid meditation.

Nº LXXII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1.

MEN complain of nothing more frequently than of deficient Memory; and, indeed, every one finds that many of the ideas which he desired to retain have slipped irretrievably away; that the acquisitions of the mind are sometimes equally fugitive with the gifts of fortune; and that a short intermission of attention more certainly lessens knowledge than impairs an estate.

To assist this weakness of our nature, many methods have been proposed, all of which may be justly suspected of being ineffectual; for no art of memory, however its effects have been boasted or admired, has been ever adopted into general use, nor have those who possessed it appeared to excel others in readiness

of recollection or multiplicity of attainments.

There is another art of which all have felt the want, though Themistocles only confessed it. We suffer equal pain from the pertinacious adhesion of unwelcome images, as from the evanescence of those which are pleasing and useful; and it may be doubted whether we should be more benefited by the art of Memory or the art of Forgetfulness.

Forgetfulness is necessary to remembrance. Ideas are retained by renovation of that impression which time is always wearing away, and which new images are striving to obliterate. If useless thoughts could be expelled from the mind, all the valuable parts of our knowledge

knowledge would more frequently recur, and every recurrence would reinstate them in their former place.

It is impossible to consider, without some regret, how much might have been learned, or how much might have been invented, by a rational and vigorous application of time, uselessly or painfully passed in the revocation of events, which have left neither good nor evil behind them, in grief for misfortunes either repaired or irreparable, in resentment of injuries known only to ourselves, of which death has put the authors beyond our power.

Philosophy has accumulated precept upon precept, to warn us against the anticipation of future calamities. All use-
less misery is certainly folly, and he that feels evils before they come may be deservedly censured; yet surely to dread the future is more reasonable than to lament the past. The business of life is to go forwards: he who sees evil in prospect meets it in his way, but he who catches it by retrospection turns back to find it. That which is feared may sometimes be avoided, but that which is regretted to-day may be regretted again to-morrow.

Regret is indeed useful and virtuous, and not only allowable but necessary, when it tends to the amendment of life, or to admonition of error which we may be again in danger of committing. But a very small part of the moments spent in meditation on the past, produce any reasonable caution or salutary sorrow. Most of the mortifications that we have suffered, arose from the concurrence of local and temporary circumstances, which can never meet again, and most of our disappointments have succeeded those expectations, which life allows not to be formed a second time.

It would add much to human happiness, if an art could be taught of for-

getting all of which the remembrance is at once useless and afflictive, if that pain which never can end in pleasure could be driven totally away, that the mind might perform its functions without incumbrance, and the past might no longer encroach on the present.

Little can be done well to which the whole mind is not applied; the business of every day calls for the day to which it is assigned; and he will have no leisure to regret yesterday's vexations who resolves not to have a new subject of regret to-morrow.

But to forget or to remember at pleasure, are equally beyond the power of man. Yet as memory may be assisted by method, and the decays of knowledge repaired by stated times of recollection, so the power of forgetting is capable of improvement. Reason will, by a resolute contest, prevail over imagination, and the power may be obtained of transferring the attention as judgment shall direct.

The incursions of troublesome thoughts are often violent and importunate; and it is not easy to a mind accustomed to their inroads to expel them immediately by putting better images into motion; but this enemy of quiet is above all others weakened by every defeat; the reflection which has been once overpowered and ejected, seldom returns with any formidable vehemence.

Employment is the great instrument of intellectual dominion. The mind cannot retire from its enemy into total vacancy, or turn aside from one object but by passing to another. The gloomy and the resentful are always found among those who have nothing to do, or who do nothing. We must be busy about good or evil, and he to whom the present offers nothing will often be looking backward on the past.

N° LXXIII. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8.

THAT every man would be rich if a wish could obtain riches, is a position, which I believe few will contest: at least in a nation like ours, in which commerce has kindled an universal emulation of wealth, and in which money receives all the honours which are the proper right of knowledge and of virtue.

Yet though we are all labouring for gold as for the chief good, and, by the natural effort of unwearied diligence, have found many expeditious methods of obtaining it, we have not been able to improve the art of using it, or to make it produce more happiness than it afforded in former times, when every de-
claimer expatiated on its mischiefs, and

Every philosopher taught his followers to despise it.

Many of the dangers imputed of old to exorbitant wealth, are now at an end. The rich are neither way-laid by robbers, nor watched by informers; there is nothing to be dreaded from proscriptions, or seizures. The necessity of concealing treasures has long ceased; no man now needs counterfeit mediocrity; and condemn his plate and jewels to caverns and darkness, or feast his mind with the consciousness of clouded splendour, of finery which is useless till it is shewn, and which he dares not shew.

In our time the poor are strongly tempted to assume the appearance of wealth, but the wealthy very rarely desire to be thought poor; for we are all at full liberty to display riches by every mode of ostentation. We fill our houses with useless ornaments, only to shew that we can buy them; we cover our coaches with gold, and employ artists in the discovery of new fashions of expence; and yet it cannot be found that riches produce happiness.

Of riches, as of every thing else, the hope is more than the enjoyment; while we consider them as the means to be used, at some future time, for the attainment of felicity, we press on our pursuit ardently and vigorously, and that ardour secures us from weariness of ourselves; but no sooner do we sit down to enjoy our acquisitions, than we find them insufficient to fill up the vacancies of life.

One cause which is not always observed in the insufficiency of riches, is, that they very seldom make their owner rich. To be rich, is to have more than is desired, and more than is wanted; to have something which may be spent without reluctance, and scattered without care, with which the sudden demands of desire may be gratified, the casual freaks of fancy indulged, or the unexpected opportunities of benevolence improved.

Avarice is always poor, but poor by her own fault. There is another poverty to which the rich are exposed with less guilt by the officiousness of others. Every man, eminent for exuberance of fortune, is surrounded from morning to evening, and from evening to midnight, by flatterers, whose art of adulation consists in exciting artificial wants, and in forming new schemes of profusion.

Tom Tranquil, when he came to age,

found himself in possession of a fortune, of which the twentieth part might perhaps have made him rich. His temper is easy, and his affections soft; he receives every man with kindness, and hears him with credulity. His friends took care to settle him by giving him a wife, whom, having no particular inclination, he rather accepted than chose, because he was told that she was proper for him.

He was now to live with dignity proportionate to his fortune. What his fortune requires or admits Tom does not know, for he has little skill in computation, and none of his friends think it their interest to improve it. If he was suffered to live by his own choice, he would leave every thing as he finds it, and pass through the world distinguished only by inoffensive gentleness. But the ministers of luxury have marked him out as one at whose expence they may exercise their arts. A companion, who had just learned the names of the Italian masters, runs from sale to sale, and buys pictures, for which Mr. Tranquil pays, without enquiring where they shall be hung. Another fills his garden with statues, which Tranquil wishes away, but dares not remove. One of his friends is learning architecture by building him a house, which he passed by, and enquired to whom it belonged; another has been for three years digging canals and raising mounts, cutting trees down in one place, and planting them in another, on which Tranquil looks with serene indifference, without asking what will be the cost. Another projector tells him that a water-work, like that of Versailles, will complete the beauties of his seat, and lays his draughts before him; Tranquil turns his eyes upon them, and the artist begins his explanations; Tranquil raises no objections, but orders him to begin the work, that he may escape from talk which he does not understand.

Thus a thousand hands are busy at his expence, without adding to his pleasures. He pays and receives visits, and has loitered in publick or in solitude, talking in summer of the town, and in winter of the country, without knowing that his fortune is impaired, till his steward told him this morning, that he could pay the workmen no longer but by mortgaging a manor.

N^o LXXIV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15.

IN the mythological pedigree of learning, Memory is made the mother of the Muses, by which the masters of ancient wisdom, perhaps, meant to shew the necessity of storing the mind copiously with true notions, before the imagination should be suffered to form fictions or collect embellishments; for the works of an ignorant poet can afford nothing higher than pleasing sound, and fiction is of no other use than to display the treasures of Memory.

The necessity of Memory to the acquisition of knowledge is inevitably felt and universally allowed, so that scarcely any other of the mental faculties are commonly considered as necessary to a student: he that admires the proficiency of another, always attributes it to the happiness of his Memory; and he that laments his own defects, concludes with a wish that his Memory was better.

* It is evident, that when the power of retention is weak, all the attempts at eminence of knowledge must be vain; and as few are willing to be doomed to perpetual ignorance, I may, perhaps, afford consolation to some that have fallen too easily into despondence, by observing that such weakness is, in my opinion, very rare, and that few have reason to complain of Nature as unkindly sparing of the gifts of Memory.

In the common business of life, we find the Memory of one like that of another, and honestly impute omissions not to involuntary forgetfulness, but culpable inattention; but in literary enquiries, failure is imputed rather to want of Memory than of diligence.

We consider ourselves as defective in Memory, either because we remember less than we desire, or less than we suppose others to remember.

Memory is like all other human powers, with which no man can be satisfied who measures them by what he can conceive, or by what he can desire. He whose mind is most capacious, finds it much too narrow for his wishes; he that remembers most, remembers little compared with what he forgets. He therefore that, after the perusal of a book, finds few ideas remaining in his mind,

is not to consider the disappointment as peculiar to himself, or to resign all hopes of improvement, because he does not retain what even the author has perhaps forgotten.

He who compares his Memory with that of others, is often too hasty to lament the inequality. Nature has sometimes, indeed, afforded examples of enormous, wonderful, and gigantic Memory. Scaliger reports of himself, that, in his youth, he could repeat above an hundred verses, having once read them; and Barthicus declares, that he wrote his *Comment upon Claudian* without consulting the text. But not to have such degrees of Memory, is no more to be lamented, than not to have the strength of Hercules, or the swiftness of Achilles. He that in the distribution of good has an equal share with common men, may justly be contented. Where there is no striking disparity, it is difficult to know of two which remembers most, and still more difficult to discover which read with greater attention, which has renewed the first impression by more frequent repetitions, or by what accidental combination of ideas either mind might have united any particular narrative or argument to its former stock.

But Memory, however impartially distributed, so often deceives our trust, that almost every man attempts, by some artifice or other, to secure its fidelity.

It is the practice of many readers, to note in the margin of their books, the most important passages, the strongest arguments, or the brightest sentiments. Thus they load their minds with superfluous attention; repress the vehemence of curiosity by useless deliberation, and by frequent interruption break the current of narration or the chain of reason, and at last close the volume, and forget the passages and marks together.

Others I have found unalterably persuaded, that nothing is certainly remembered but what is transcribed; and they have therefore passed weeks and months in transferring large quotations to a common-place book. Yet, why any part of a book, which can be consulted at pleasure, should be copied, I was ne-

ver able to discover. The hand has no closer correspondence with the Memory than the eye. The act of writing itself distracts the thoughts, and what is read twice is commonly better remembered than what is transcribed. This method therefore consumes time without assisting Memory.

The true art of Memory is the art of attention. No man will read with much advantage, who is not able, at pleasure, to evacuate his mind, or who brings not to his author an intellect de-

fecated and pure, neither turbid with care, no agitated by pleasure. If the repositories of thought are already full, what can they receive? If the mind is employed on the past or future, the book will be held before the eyes in vain. What is read with delight is commonly retained, because pleasure always secures attention; but the books which are consulted by occasional necessity, and perused with impatience, seldom leave any traces on the mind.

N° LXXV. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22.

IN the time when Bassora was considered as the school of Asia, and flourished by the reputation of its professors and the confluence of its students, among the pupils that listened round the chair of Albumazar was Gelaleddin, a native of Tauris in Persia, a young man amiable in his manners and beautiful in his form, of boundless curiosity, incessant diligence, and irresistible genius, of quick apprehension and tenacious memory, accurate without narrowness, and eager for novelty without inconstancy.

No sooner did Gelaleddin appear at Bassora, than his virtues and abilities raised him to distinction. He passed from class to class, rather admired than envied by those whom the rapidity of his progress left behind; he was consulted by his fellow-students as an oraculous guide, and admitted as a competent auditor to the conferences of the sages.

After a few years, having passed through all the exercises of probation, Gelaleddin was invited to a professor's seat, and entreated to increase the splendour at Bassora. Gelaleddin affected to deliberate on the proposal, with which, before he considered it, he resolved to comply; and next morning retired to a garden planted for the recreation of the students, and, entering a solitary walk, began to meditate upon his future life.

'If I am thus eminent,' said he, 'in the regions of literature, I shall be yet more conspicuous in any other place: if I should now devote myself to study and retirement, I must pass my life in silence, unacquainted with the delights of wealth, the influence of power, the pomp of greatness, and the charms of

elegance, with all that man envies and desires, with all that keeps the world in motion, by the hope of gaining or the fear of losing it. I will therefore depart to Tauris, where the Persian monarch resides in all the splendour of absolute dominion: my reputation will fly before me, my arrival will be congratulated by my kinsmen, and my friends; I shall see the eyes of those who predicted my greatness sparkling with exultation, and the faces of those that once despised me clouded with envy, or counterfeiting kindness by artificial smiles. I will shew my wisdom by my discourse, and my moderation by my silence; I will instruct the modest with easy gentleness, and repress the ostentatious by seasonable superciliousness. My apartments will be crowded by the inquisitive and the vain, by those that honour and those that rival me; my name will soon reach the court; I shall stand before the throne of the emperor; the judges of the law will confess my wisdom, and the nobles will contend to heap gifts upon me. If I shall find that my merit, like that of others, excites malignity, or feel myself tottering on the seat of elevation, I may at last retire to academic obscurity, and become, in my lowest state, a professor of Bassora.'

Having thus settled his determination, he declared to his friends his design of visiting Tauris, and saw with more pleasure than he ventured to express, the regret with which he was dismissed. He could not bear to delay the honours to which he was destined, and therefore hastened away, and in a short time entered the capital of Persia. He was immediately

ately immersed in the crowd, and passed unobserved to his father's house. He entered, and was received, though not unkindly, yet without any excess of fondness or exclamations of rapture. His father had, in his absence, suffered many losses, and Gelaeddin was considered as an additional burthen to a falling family.

When he recovered from his surprize, he began to display his acquisitions, and practised all the arts of narration and disquisition: but the poor have no leisure to be pleased with eloquence; they heard his arguments without reflection, and his pleasantries without a smile. He then applied himself singly to his brothers and sisters, but found them all chained down by invariable attention to their own fortunes, and insensible of any other excellence than that which could bring some remedy for indigence.

It was now known in the neighbourhood that Gelaeddin was returned, and he fate for some days in expectation that the learned would visit him for consultation, or the great for entertainment. But who will be pleased or instructed in the mansions of Poverty? He then frequented places of public resort, and endeavoured to attract notice by the copiousness of his talk. The spritely were silenced, and went away to censure in

some other place his arrogance and his pedantry; and the dull listened quietly for a while, and then wondered why any man should take pains to obtain so much knowledge which would never do him good.

He next solicited the visiers for employment, not doubting but his service would be eagerly accepted. He was told by one that there was no vacancy in his office; by another, that his merit was above any patronage but that of the emperor; by a third, that he would not forget him; and by the chief visier, that he did not think literature of any great use in publick business. He was sometimes admitted to their tables, where he exerted his wit and diffused his knowledge; but he observed, that where, by endeavour or accident, he had remarkably excelled, he was seldom invited a second time.

He now returned to Bassora, wearied and disgusted, but confident of resuming his former rank, and revelling again in satiety of praise. But he who had been neglected at Tauris, was not much regarded at Bassora; he was considered as a fugitive, who returned only because he could live in no other place; his companions found that they had formerly over-rated his abilities, and he lived long without notice or esteem.

N° LXXVI. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29:

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Was much pleased with your ridicule of those shallow Criticks, whose judgment, though often right as far as it goes, yet reaches only to inferior beauties, and who, unable to comprehend the whole, judge only by parts, and from thence determine the merit of extensive works. But there is another kind of Critick still worse, who judges by narrow rules, and those too often false; and which, though they should be true, and founded on nature, will lead him but a very little way towards the just estimation of the sublime beauties in works of genius; for whatever part of an art can be executed or criticised by rules, that part is no longer the work of genius, which implies excellence out of the reach of rules. For my own part,

I profess myself an Idler, and love to give my judgment, such as it is, from my immediate perceptions, without much fatigue of thinking; and I am of opinion, that if a man has not those perceptions right, it will be vain for him to endeavour to supply their place by rules, which may enable him to talk more learnedly, but not to distinguish more acutely. Another reason which has lessened my affection for the study of criticism is, that Criticks so far as I have observed, debar themselves from receiving any pleasure from the polite arts, at the same time that they profess to love and admire them: for these rules, being always uppermost, give them such a propensity to criticise, that, instead of giving up the reins of their imagination into their author's hands, their frigid minds are employed in examining whether

ther the performance be according to the rules of art.

To those who are resolved to be Criticks in spite of nature, and at the same time have no great disposition to much reading and study, I would recommend to them to assume the character of Connoisseur, which may be purchased at a much cheaper rate than that of a Critick in poetry. The remembrance of a few names of painters, with their general character; with a few rules of the academy, which they may pick up among the painters, will go a great way towards making a very notable connoisseur.

With a gentleman of this cast, I visited last week the Cartoons at Hampton Court: he was just returned from Italy, a Connoisseur of course, and of course his mouth full of nothing but the grace of Raffaele, the purity of Domenichino, the learning of Poussin, the air of Guido, the greatness of taste of the Charaches, and the sublimity and grand contorno of Michael Angelo; with all the rest of the cant of criticism, which he emitted with that volubility which generally those orators have who annex no ideas to their words.

As we were passing through the rooms, in our way to the gallery, I made him observe a whole length of Charles the First by Vandyke, as a perfect representation of the character as well as the figure of the man. He agreed it was very fine, but it wanted spirit and contrast, and had not the flowing line, without which a figure could not possibly be graceful. When we entered the gallery, I thought I could perceive him recollecting his rules by which he was to criticise Raffaele. I shall pass over his observation of the boats being too little, and other criticisms of that kind, till we arrived at *St. Paul preaching*.

'This,' says he, 'is esteemed the most excellent of all the Cartoons; what nobleness, what dignity there is in that figure of St. Paul! and yet what an addition to that nobleness could Raffaele have given, had the art of contrast been known in his time? but above all, the flowing line, which constitutes grace and beauty. You would not then have seen an upright figure standing equally on both legs, and both hands stretched forward in the same direction, and his drapery, to all appearance, without the least art of disposition.' The following pic-

ture is the *Charge to Peter*. 'Here,' says he, 'are twelve upright figures; what a pity it is that Raffaele was not acquainted with the pyramidal principle! he would then have contrived the figures in the middle to have been on higher ground, or the figures at the extremities stooping or lying, which would not only have formed the group into the shape of a pyramid, but likewise contrasted the standing figures. Indeed,' added he, 'I have often lamented that so great a genius as Raffaele had not lived in this enlightened age, since the art has been reduced to principles, and had had his education in one of the modern academies; what glorious works might we then have expected from this divine pencil!'

I shall trouble you no longer, with my friend's observations, which, I suppose, you are now able to continue by yourself. It is curious to observe, that, at the same time that great admiration is pretended for a name of fixed reputation, objections are raised against those very qualities by which that great name was acquired.

Those Criticks are continually lamenting that Raffaele had not the colouring and harmony of Rubens, or the light and shadow of Rembrandt, without considering how much the gay harmony of the former, and affectation of the latter, would take from the dignity of Raffaele; and yet Rubens had great harmony, and Rembrandt understood light and shadow; but what may be an excellence in a lower class of painting, becomes a blemish in a higher; as the quick, sprightly turn, which is the life and beauty of epigrammatick compositions, would but ill suit with the majesty of heroick poetry.

To conclude; I would not be thought to infer from any thing that has been said, that rules are absolutely unnecessary, but to censure scrupulosity, a servile attention to minute exactness, which is sometimes inconsistent with higher excellency, and is lost in the blaze of expanded genius.

I do not know whether you will think painting a general subject. By inserting this letter, perhaps you will incur the censure a man would deserve, whose business being to entertain a whole room, should turn his back to the company, and talk to a particular person. I am, Sir, &c.

N° LXXVII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6.

EASY Poetry is universally admired; but I know not whether any rule has yet been fixed, by which it may be decided when Poetry can be properly called easy. Horace has told us, that it is such as *every reader hopes to equal, but after long labour finds unattainable*. This is a very loose description, in which only the effect is noted; the qualities which produce this effect remain to be investigated.

Easy poetry is that in which natural thoughts are expressed without violence to the language. The discriminating character of Easy consists principally in the diction, for all true poetry requires that the sentiments be natural. Language suffers violence by harsh or by daring figures, by transposition, by unusual acceptations of words, and by any licence, which would be avoided by a writer of prose. Where any artifice appears in the construction of the verse, that verse is no longer easy. Any epithet which can be ejected without diminution of the sense, any curious iteration of the same word, and all unusual, though not ungrammatical structure of speech, destroy the grace of easy poetry.

The first lines of Pope's *Iliad* afford examples of many licences which an easy writer must decline.

*Achilles' wrath, to Greece, the direful spring
Of woes unnumber'd, heav'nly Goddess, sing,
The wrath which burl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain.*

In the first couplet the language is distorted by inversions, clogged with superfluities, and clouded by a harsh metaphor; and in the second there are two words used in an uncommon sense, and two epithets inserted only to lengthen the line; all these practices may in a long work easily be pardoned, but they always produce some degree of obliquity and ruggedness.

Easy poetry has been so long excluded by ambition of ornament, and luxuriance of imagery, that it's nature seems now to be forgotten. Affectation, however opposite to ease, is sometimes mistaken for it; and those who aspire to gentle elegance, collect female phrases and fashionable barbarisms, and ima-

gine that style to be easy which custom has made familiar. Such was the idea of the poet who wrote the following verses to a *Countess cutting paper*.

*Pallas grew wondrous once and odd,
She would not do the least right thing
Either for Goddesses or for God,
Nor work, nor play, nor paint, nor sing.
Jove frown'd, and 'Use, he cry'd, 'those eyes
' So skilful, and those hands so taper;
' Do something exquisite and wise. —
She bow'd, obey'd him, and cut piper.*

This vexing him who gave her birth,
Thought by all heaven a burning shame,
*What does she next, but bids on earth
Her Burlington do just the same?*
*Pallas you give yourself strange airs;
But sure you'll find it hard to spoil
The sense and taste of one that bears
The name of Savile and of Boyle.*

Alas! one bad example shewn,
How quickly all the sex pursue!
See, Madam! see the arts o'erthrown
Between *John Overton* and you.

It is the prerogative of easy poetry to be understood as long as the language lasts; but modes of speech, which owe their prevalence only to modish folly, or to the eminence of those that use them, die away with their inventors, and their meaning, in a few years, is no longer known.

Easy poetry is commonly sought in petty compositions upon minute subjects; but ease, though it excludes pomp, will admit greatness. Many lines in Cato's Soliloquy are at once easy and sublime.

'Tis the Dignity that sits within us;
'Tis Heaven itself that points out an heresie,
And intimates eternity to man.

—— If there is a Power above us,
And that there is all Nature cries aloud
Thro' all her works, he must delight in virtue,
And that which he delights in must be happy.

Nor is ease more contrary to wit than to sublimity; the celebrated stanza of Cowley, on a lady elaborately dressed, loses nothing of it's freedom by the spirit of the sentiment.

Th' adorning thee with so much art
Is but a bar'rous skill,
'Tis like the poisoning of a dart,
Too apt before to kill.

Cowley

Cowley seems to have possessed the power of writing easily beyond any other of our poets, yet his pursuit of remote thoughts led him often into harshness of expression. Waller often attempted, but seldom attained it; for he is too frequently driven into transpositions. The poets, from the time of Dryden, have gradually advanced in embellishment, and consequently departed from simplicity and ease.

To require from any author many

pieces of easy poetry, would be indeed to oppress him with too hard a task. It is less difficult to write a volume of lines swelled with epithets, brightened by figures, and stiffened by transpositions, than to produce a few couplets graced only by naked elegance and simple purity, which require so much care and skill, that I doubt whether any of our authors has yet been able, for twenty lines together, nicely to observe the true definition of easy poetry.

N^o LXXVIII. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13.

I Have passed the summer in one of those places to which a mineral spring gives the idle and luxurious an annual reason for resorting, whenever they fancy themselves offended by the heat of London. What is the true motive of this periodical assembly, I have never yet been able to discover. The greater part of the visitants neither feel diseases nor fear them. What pleasure can be expected more than the variety of the journey, I know not, for the numbers are too great for privacy, and too small for diversion. As each is known to be a spy upon the rest, they all live in continual restraint; and having but a narrow range for censure, they gratify it's cravings by preying on one another.

But every condition has some advantages. In this confinement a smaller circle affords opportunities for more exact observation. The glass that magnifies it's object contracts the sight to a point, and the mind must be fixed upon a single character to remark it's minute peculiarities. The quality or habit which passes unobserved in the tumult of successive multitudes, becomes conspicuous when it is offered to the notice day after day; and perhaps I have, without any distinct notice, seen thousands like my late companions; for when the scene can be varied at pleasure, a slight disgust turns us aside before a deep impression can be made upon the mind.

There was a select sett, supposed to be distinguished by superiority of intellects, who always passed the evening together. To be admitted to their conversation was the highest honour of the place: many youths aspired to distinction, by pretending to occasional invitations; and the ladies were often wishing

to be men, that they might partake the pleasures of learned society.

I know not whether by merit or destiny, I was, soon after my arrival, admitted to this envied party, which I frequented till I had learned the art by which each endeavoured to support his character.

Tom Steady was a vehement assertor of uncontroverted truth; and by keeping himself out of the reach of contradiction, had acquired all the confidence which the consciousness of irresistible abilities could have given. I was once mentioning a man of eminence, and, after having recounted his virtues, endeavoured to represent him fully, by mentioning his faults. 'Sir,' said Mr. Steady, 'that he has faults I can easily believe, for who is without them? No man, Sir, is now alive, among the innumerable multitudes that swarm upon the earth, however wise, or however good, who has not, in some degree, his failings and his faults. If there be any man faultless, bring him forth into publick view, shew him openly, and let him be known; but I will venture to affirm, and, till the contrary be plainly shewn, shall always maintain, that no such man is to be found. Tell not me, Sir, of impeccability and perfection; such talk is for those that are strangers in the world: I have seen several nations, and conversed with all ranks of people; I have known the great and the mean, the learned and the ignorant, the old and the young, the clerical and the lay, but I have never found a man without a fault; and I suppose shall die in the opinion, that to be human is to be frail.'

To all this nothing could be opposed. I listened with a hanging head; Mr. Steady looked round on the hearers with triumph, and saw every eye congratulating his victory; he departed, and spent the next morning in following those who retired from the company, and telling them, with injunctions of secrecy, how poor Spritely began to take liberties with men wiser than himself; but that he suppressed him by a decisive argument, which put him totally to silence.

Dick Snug is a man of sly remark and pithy sententiousness: he never immerses himself in the stream of conversation, but lies to catch his companions in the eddy: he is often very successful in breaking narratives and confounding eloquence. A gentleman, giving the history of one of his acquaintance, made mention of a lady that had many lovers: — ‘Then,’ said Dick, ‘she was either handsome or rich.’ This observation being well received, Dick watched the progress of the tale; and hearing of a man lost in a ship-wreck, remarked, that *no man was ever drowned upon dry land.*

Will Startle is a man of exquisite sensibility, whose delicacy of frame, and quickness of discernment, subject him to impressions from the slightest causes; and who therefore passes his life between rapture and horror, in quiverings of delight, or convulsions of disgust. His emotions are too violent for many words; his thoughts are always discovered by exclamations. *Vile, odious, horrid, detestable, and sweet, charming, delightful, astonishing,* compose almost his whole vocabulary, which he utters with various contortions and gesticulations, not easily related or described.

Jaek Solid is a man of much reading, who utters nothing but quotations; but having been, I suppose, too confident

of his memory, he has for some time neglected his books, and his stock grows every day more scanty. Mr. Solid has found an opportunity every night to repeat from Hudibras—

Doubtless the pleasure is as great
Of being cheated, as to cheat.

And from Waller—

Poets lose half the praise they would have got.
Were it but known that they discreetly blot.

Dick Mifty is a man of deep research and forcible penetration. Others are content with superficial appearances; but Dick holds, that there is no effect without a cause, and values himself upon his power of explaining the difficult, and displaying the abstruse. Upon a dispute among us which of two young strangers was more beautiful—‘You,’ says Mr. Mifty, turning to me, ‘like Aramantia better than Chloris. I do not wonder at the preference, for the cause is evident: there is in man a perception of harmony, and a sensibility of perfection, which touches the finer fibres of the mental texture; and before Reason can descend from her throne, to pass her sentence upon the things compared, drives us towards the object proportioned to our faculties, by an impulse gentle, yet irresistible; for the harmonick system of the universe, and the reciprocal magnetism of similar natures, are always operating towards conformity and union; nor can the powers of the soul cease from agitation till they find something on which they can repose.’ To this nothing was opposed, and Aramantia was acknowledged to excel Chloris.

Of the rest you may expect an account from, Sir, yours,

ROBIN SPRITELY.

Nº LXXIX. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20.

TO THE IDLER.

^{SIR,}
YOUR acceptance of a former letter on Painting gives me encouragement to offer a few more sketches on the same subject.

Amongst the Painters and the writers on Painting, there is one maxim uni-

versally admitted and continually inculcated. *Imitate nature* is the invariable rule; but I know none who have explained in what manner this rule is to be understood; the consequence of which is, that every one takes it in the most obvious sense, that objects are represented naturally when they have such relief that they seem real. It may appear strange,

strange, perhaps, to hear this sense of the rule disputed; but it must be considered, that if the excellency of a Painter consisted only in this kind of imitation, Painting must lose it's rank, and be no longer considered as a liberal art, and filter to Poetry, this imitation being merely mechanical, in which the slowest intellect is always sure to succeed best; for the Painter of genius cannot stoop to drudgery, in which the understanding has no part; and what pretence has the art to claim kindred with Poetry, but by it's powers over the imagination? To this power the Painter of genius directs him; in this sense he studies nature, and often arrives at his end, even by being unnatural in the confined sense of the word.

The grand style of Painting requires this minute attention to be carefully avoided, and must be kept as separate from it as the style of Poetry from that of History. Poetical ornaments destroy that air of truth and plainness which ought to characterize history; but the very being of poetry consists in departing from this plain narration, and adopting every ornament that will warm the imagination. To desire to see the excellencies of each style united, to mingle the Dutch with the Italian school, is to join contrarieties which cannot subsist together, and which destroy the efficacy of each other. The Italian attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature; the Dutch, on the contrary, to literal truth and a minute exactness in the detail, as I may say, of nature modified by accident. The attention to these petty peculiarities is the very cause of this naturalness so much admired in the Dutch pictures, which, if we suppose it to be a beauty, is certainly of a lower order, which ought to give place to a beauty of a superior kind, since one cannot be obtained but by departing from the other.

If my opinion was asked concerning the works of Michael Angelo, whether they would receive any advantage from possessing this mechanical merit, I should not scruple to say they would not only receive no advantage, but would lose, in a great measure, the effect which they now have on every mind susceptible of great and noble ideas. His works may be said to be all genius and soul, and why should they be loaded with heavy

matter which can only counteract his purpose by retarding the progress of the imagination.

If this opinion should be thought one of the wild extravagancies of enthusiasm, I shall only say, that those who censure it are not conversant in the works of the great masters. It is very difficult to determine the exact degree of enthusiasm that the arts of Painting and Poetry may admit. There may perhaps be too great an indulgence as well as too great a restraint of imagination; and if the one produces incoherent monsters, the other produces what is full as bad, lifeless insipidity. An intimate knowledge of the passions, and good sense, but not common sense, must at last determine it's limits. It has been thought, and I believe with reason, that Michael Angelo sometimes transgressed those limits; and I think I have seen figures of him of which it was very difficult to determine whether they were in the highest degree sublime or extremely ridiculous. Such faults may be said to be the ebullitions of genius; but at least he had this merit, that he never was insipid, and whatever passion his works may excite, they will always escape contempt.

What I have had under consideration is the sublimest style, particularly that of Michael Angelo, the Homer of Painting. Other kinds may admit of this naturalness, which of the lowest kind is the chief merit; but in Painting, as in Poetry, the highest style has the least of common nature.

One may very safely recommend a little more enthusiasm to the modern Painters; too much is certainly not the vice of the present age. The Italians seem to have been continually declining in this respect from the time of Michael Angelo to that of Carlo Maratti, and from thence to the very bathos of insipidity to which they are now sunk; so that there is no need of remarking, that where I mentioned the Italian Painters in opposition to the Dutch, I mean not the moderns, but the heads of the old Roman and Bolognian schools; nor did I mean to include in my idea of an Italian Painter, the Venetian school, which may be said to be the Dutch part of the Italian genius. I have only to add a word of advice to the Painters, that however excellent they may be in painting naturally, they would not flatter themselves very much upon it; and to the Connois-

seurs, that when they see a cat or a fiddle painted so finely, that, as the phrase is, *it looks as if you could take it up*, they

would not for that reason immediately compare the painter to Raffaele and Michael Angelo.

N° LXXX. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27.

THAT every day has it's pains and sorrows is universally experienced, and almost universally confessed: but let us not attend only to mournful truths; if we look impartially about us, we shall find that every day has likewise it's pleasures and it's joys.

The time is now come when the town is again beginning to be full, and the rusticated beauty sees an end of her banishment. Those whom the tyranny of Fashion had condemned to pass the summer among shades and brooks, are now preparing to return to plays, balls, and assemblies, with health restored by retirement, and spirits kindled by expectation.

Many a mind which has languished some months without emotion or desire, now feels a sudden renovation of it's faculties. It was long ago observed by Pythagoras, that Ability and Necessity dwell near each other. She that wandered in the garden without sense of it's fragrance, and lay day after day stretched upon a couch behind a green curtain, unwilling to wake and unable to sleep, now summons her thoughts to consider which of her last year's cloaths shall be seen again, and to anticipate the raptures of a new suit; the day and the night are now filled with occupation; the laces which were too fine to be worn among rusticks, are taken from the boxes and reviewed, and the eye is no sooner closed after it's labours, than whole shops of silk busy the fancy.

But happiness is nothing if it is not known, and very little if it is not envied. Before the day of departure a week is always appropriated to the payment and reception of ceremonial visits, at which nothing can be mentioned but the delights of London. The lady who is hastening to the scene of action flutters her wings, displays her prospects of felicity, tells how she grudges every moment of delay, and in the presence of those, whom she knows condemned to stay at home; is sure to wonder by what arts life can be made supportable through a

winter in the country, and to tell how often amidst the extasies of an opera she shall pity those friends whom she has left behind. Her hope of giving pain is seldom disappointed; the affected indifference of one, the faint congratulations of another, the wishes of some openly confessed, and the silent dejection of the rest, all exalt her opinion of her own superiority.

But however we may labour for our own deception, truth, though unwelcome, will sometimes intrude upon the mind. They who have already enjoyed the crowds and noise of the great city, know that their desire to return is little more than the restlessness of a vacant mind, that they are not so much led by hope as driven by disgust, and wish rather to leave the country than to see the town. There is commonly in every coach a passenger enwrapped in silent expectation, whose joy is more sincere, and whose hopes are more exalted. The virgin whom the last summer released from her governess, and who is now going between her mother and her aunt to try the fortune of her wit and beauty, suspects no fallacy in the gay representation. She believes herself passing into another world, and images London as an Elyian region, where every hour has it's proper pleasure, where nothing is seen but the blaze of wealth, and nothing heard but merriment and flattery; where the morning always rises on a show, and the evening closes on a ball; where the eyes are used only to sparkle and the feet only to dance.

Her aunt and her mother amuse themselves on the road, with telling her of dangers to be dreaded, and cautions to be observed. She hears them as they heard their predecessors, with incredulity or contempt. She sees that they have ventured and escaped; and one of the pleasures which she promises herself is to detect their falsehoods, and be freed from their admonitions.

We are inclined to believe those whom we do not know, because they never

never have deceived us. The fair adventurer may perhaps listen to the Idler, whom she cannot suspect of rivalry or malice, yet he scarcely expects to be credited when he tells her, that her expectations will likewise end in disappointment.

The uniform necessities of human nature produce in a great measure uniformity of life, and for part of the day make one place like another: to dress and to undress, to eat and to sleep, are the same in London as in the country. The supernumerary hours have indeed a greater variety both of pleasure and of pain. The stranger gazed on by multitudes at her first appearance in the Park, is perhaps on the highest summit of female happiness; but how great is the anguish when the novelty of another face draws her worshippers away! The heart may leap for a time under a fine gown, but the sight of a gown yet finer puts an end to rapture. In the first row at an opera two hours may be happily passed in listening to the musick on the stage, and watching the glances of the company; but how will the night end

in despondency, when she that imagined herself the sovereign of the place sees lords contending to lead Iris to her chair? There is little pleasure in conversation to her whose wit is regarded but in the second place; and who can dance with ease or spirit that sees Amaryllis led out before her? She that fancied nothing but a succession of pleasures, will find herself engaged without design in numberless competitions, and mortified without provocation with numberless afflictions.

But I do not mean to extinguish that ardour which I wish to moderate, or to discourage those whom I am endeavouring to restrain. To know the world is necessary, since we were born for the help of one another; and to know it early is convenient, if it be only that we may learn early to despise it. She that brings to London a mind well prepared for improvement, though she misses her hope of uninterrupted happiness, will gain in return an opportunity of adding knowledge to vivacity, and enlarging innocence to virtue.

Nº LXXXI. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3.

AS the English army was passing towards Quebec along a soft savanna between a mountain and a lake, one of the petty chiefs of the inland regions stood upon a rock surrounded by his clan, and from behind the shelter of the bushes contemplated the art and regularity of European war. It was evening, the tents were pitched: he observed the security with which the troops rested in the night, and the order with which the march was renewed in the morning. He continued to pursue them with his eye till they could be seen no longer, and then stood for some time silent and pensive.

Then turning to his followers—'My children,' said he, 'I have often heard from men hoary with long life, that there was a time when our ancestors were absolute lords of the woods, the meadows, and the lakes, wherever the eye can reach or the foot can pass. They fished and hunted, feasted and danced, and when they were weary lay down under the first thicket, without danger and without fear. They changed their habitations at the sea-

sons required, convenience prompted, or curiosity allured them; and sometimes gathered the fruits of the mountain, and sometimes sported in canoes along the coast.

'Many years and ages are supposed to have been thus passed in plenty and security; when, at last, a new race of men entered our country from the great ocean. They inclosed themselves in habitations of stone, which our ancestors could neither enter by violence, nor destroy by fire. They issued from those fastnesses, sometimes covered like the armadillo with shells, from which the lance rebounded on the striker, and sometimes carried by mighty beasts which had never been seen in our vales or forests, of such strength and swiftness, that flight and opposition were alike vain. Those invaders ranged over the continent, slaughtering in their rage those that resisted, and those that submitted, in their mirth. Of those that remained, some were buried in caverns, and condemned to dig metals for their masters; some were employed

employed in tilling the ground, of which foreign tyrants devour the produce; and when the sword and the mines have destroyed the natives, they supply their place by human beings of another colour, brought from some distant country to perish here under toil and torture.

Some there are who boast their humanity, and content themselves to seize our chaces and fisheries, who drive us from every track of ground where fertility and pleasantness invite them to settle, and make no war upon us except when we intrude upon our own lands.

Others pretend to have purchased a right of residence and tyranny; but surely the insolence of such bargains is more offensive than the avowed and open dominion of force. What reward can induce the possessor of a country to admit a stranger more powerful than himself? Fraud or terror must operate in such contracts; either they promised protection which they never have afforded, or instruction which they never imparted. We hoped to be secured by their favour from some other evil, or to learn the arts of Europe, by which we might be able to secure ourselves. Their power they have never exerted in our defence, and their arts they have studiously concealed from us. Their treaties are only to deceive, and their traffick only to defraud us. They have a written law among them, of which they boast as derived from Him

who made the earth and sea, and by which they profess to believe that man will be made happy when life shall forsake him. Why is not this law communicated to us? It is concealed because it is violated. For how can they preach it to an Indian nation, when I am told that one of its first precepts forbids them to do to others what they would not that others should do to them?

But the time perhaps is now approaching when the pride of usurpation shall be crushed, and the cruelties of invasion shall be revenged. The sons of Rapacity have now drawn their swords upon each other, and referred their claims to the decision of war; let us look unconcerned upon the slaughter, and remember that the death of every European delivers the country from a tyrant and a robber; for what is the claim of either nation, but the claim of the vulture to the leveret, of the tyger to the faun? Let them then continue to dispute their title to regions which they cannot people, to purchase by danger and blood the empty dignity of dominion over mountains which they will never climb, and rivers which they will never pass. Let us endeavour, in the mean time, to learn their discipline, and to forge their weapons; and when they shall be weakened with mutual slaughter, let us rush down upon them, force their remains to take shelter in their ships, and reign once more in our native country.

N° LXXXII. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10.

TO THE IDLER.

STR,
DISCOURSING in my last letter on the different practice of the Italian and Dutch Painters, I observed, that 'the Italian Painter attends only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal nature.'

I was led into the subject of this letter by endeavouring to fix the original cause of this conduct of the Italian masters. If it can be proved that by this choice they selected the most beautiful part of the creation, it will shew how much their principles are founded

on reason, and, at the same time, discover the origin of our ideas of beauty.

I suppose it will be easily granted, that no man can judge whether any animal be beautiful in it's kind, or deformed, who has seen only one of that species; that is as conclusive in regard to the human figure; so that if a man, born blind, was to recover his sight, and the most beautiful woman was brought before him, he could not determine whether she was handsome or not; nor if the most beautiful and most deformed were produced, could he any better determine to which he should give the preference, having seen only those two. To distin-

guish

guish beauty, then, implies the having ten many individuals of that species. If it is asked, how is more skill acquired by the observation of greater numbers? I answer, that, in consequence of having seen many, the power is acquired, even without seeking after it, of distinguishing between accidental blemishes and excellences which are continually varying the surface of Nature's works, and the invariable general form which Nature most frequently produces, and always seems to intend in her productions.

Thus amongst the blades of grass or leaves of the same tree, though no two can be found exactly alike, yet the general form is invariable: a naturalist, before he chose one as a sample, would examine many, since if he took the first that occurred, it might have, by accident or otherwise, such a form as that it would scarce be known to belong to that species; he selects, as the Painter does, the most beautiful, that is, the most general form of nature.

Every species of the animal as well as the vegetable creation may be said to have a fixed or determinate form towards which nature is continually inclining, like various lines terminating in the center; or it may be compared to pendulums vibrating in different directions over one central point; and as they all cross the center, though only one passes through any other point, so it will be found that perfect beauty is oftener produced by nature than deformity; I do not mean than deformity in general, but than any one kind of deformity. To instance in a particular part of a feature; the line that forms the ridge of the nose is beautiful when it is straight; this, then, is the central form which is oftener found than either concave, convex, or any other irregular form that shall be proposed. As we are then more accustomed to beauty than deformity, we may conclude that to be the reason why we approve and admire it, as we approve and admire customs and fashions of dress for no other reason than that we are used to them; so that though habit and custom cannot be said to be the cause of beauty, it is certainly the cause of our liking it: and I have no doubt but that if we were more used to deformity than beauty, deformity would then lose the idea now annexed to it, and take that of beauty; as if the whole world should

agree, that *yes* and *no* should change their meanings; *yes* would then deny, and *no* would affirm.

Whoever undertakes to proceed further in this argument, and endeavours to fix a general criterion of beauty respecting different species, or to shew why one species is more beautiful than another, it will be required from him first to prove that one species is really more beautiful than another. That we prefer one to the other, and with very good reason, will be readily granted; but it does not follow from thence that we think it a more beautiful form; for we have no criterion of form by which to determine our judgment. He who says a swan is more beautiful than a dove, means little more than that he has more pleasure in seeing a swan than a dove, either from the stateliness of its motions or its being a more rare bird; and he who gives the preference to the dove, does it from some association of ideas of innocence that he always annexes to the dove; but if he pretends to defend the preference he gives to one or the other, by endeavouring to prove that this more beautiful form proceeds from a particular gradation of magnitude, undulation of a curve, or direction of a line, or whatever other conceit of his imagination he shall fix on as a criterion of form; he will be continually contradicting himself, and find at last that the great Mother of Nature will not be subjected to such narrow rules. Among the various reasons why we prefer one part of her works to another, the most general, I believe, is habit and custom; custom makes, in a certain sense, white black, and black white; it is custom alone determines our preference of the colour of the Europeans to the *Æthiopians*, and they, for the same reason, prefer their own colour to ours. I suppose nobody will doubt, if one of their painters was to paint the Goddess of Beauty, but that he would represent her black, with thick lips, flat nose, and woolly hair; and it seems to me, he would act very unnaturally if he did not: for by what criterion will any one dispute the propriety of his idea? We, indeed, say, that the form and colour of the European is preferable to that of the *Æthiopian*; but I know of no other reason we have for it, but that we are more accustomed to it. It is absurd to say, that beauty is possessed of attractive powers,

powers, which irresistibly seize the corresponding mind with love and admiration, since that argument is equally conclusive in favour of the white and the black philosopher.

The black and white nations must, in respect of beauty, be considered as of different kinds, at least a different species of the same kind; from one of which to the other, as I observed, no inference can be drawn.

Novelty is said to be one of the causes of beauty: that novelty is a very sufficient reason why we should admire, is not denied; but because it is uncommon, is it therefore beautiful? The beauty that is produced by colour, as when we prefer one bird to another, though of the same form, on account of it's colour, has nothing to do with this argument, which reaches only to form. I have here considered the word Beauty as being properly applied to form alone. There is a necessity of fixing this confined sense; for there can be no argument, if the sense of the word is extended to every thing that is approved. A rose may as well be said to be beautiful, because it has a fine smell, as a bird because of it's colour. When we apply the word Beauty, we do not mean always by it a more beautiful form, but

something valuable on account of it's rarity, usefulness, colour, or any other property. A horse is said to be a beautiful animal; but had a horse as few good qualities as a tortoise, I do not imagine that he would be then esteemed beautiful.

A fitness to the end proposed, is said to be another cause of beauty; but supposing we were proper judges of what form is the most proper in an animal to constitute strength or swiftness, we always determine concerning it's beauty, before we exert our understanding to judge of it's fitness.

From what has been said, it may be inferred, that the works of Nature, if we compare one species with another, are all equally beautiful; and that preference is give from custom, or some association of ideas: and that in creatures of the same species, beauty is the medium or centre of all various forms.

To conclude, then, by way of corollary: if it had been proved, that the Painter, by attending to the invariable and general ideas of nature, produces beauty, he must, by regarding minute particularities and accidental discriminations, deviate from the universal rule, and pollute his canvas with deformity.

Nº LXXXIII. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17.

TO THE IDLER.

I Suppose you have forgotten that many weeks ago I promised to send you an account of my companions at the Wells. You would not deny me a place among the most faithful votaries of Idleness, if you knew how often I have recollected my engagement, and contented myself to delay the performance for some reason which I durst not examine because I knew it to be false; how often have I sat down to write, and rejoiced at interruption; and how often I have praised the dignity of resolution, determined at night to write in the morning, and referred it in the morning to the quiet hours of night.

I have at last begun what I have long wished at an end, and find it more easy than I expected to continue my narration.

Our assembly could boast no such con-

stellation of intellects as Clarendon's band of associates. We had among us no Selden, Falkland, or Waller; but we had men not less important in their own eyes, though less distinguished by the publick; and many a time have we lamented the partiality of mankind, and agreed that men of the deepest enquiry sometimes let their discoveries die away in silence; that the most comprehensive observers have seldom opportunities of imparting their remarks, and that modest merit passes in the crowd unknown and unheeded.

One of the greatest men of the society was Sim Scruple, who lives in a continual equipoise of doubt, and is a constant enemy to confidence and dogmatism. Sim's favourite topic of conversation is the narrowness of the human mind, the fallaciousness of our senses, the prevalence of early prejudice, and the uncertainty of appearances. Sim

has many doubts about the nature of death, and is sometimes inclined to believe that sensation may survive motion and that a dead man may feel though he cannot stir. He has sometimes hinted that man might perhaps have been naturally a quadruped, and thinks it would be very proper that at the Foundling Hospital some children should be inclosed in an apartment, in which the nurses should be obliged to walk half upon four, and half upon two, that the younglings, being bred without the prejudice of example, might have no other guide than nature, and might at last come forth into the world as genius should direct, erect, or prone, on two legs or on four.

The next in dignity of mien and fluency of talk, was Dick Wormwood, whose sole delight is to find every thing wrong. Dick never enters a room but he shews that the door and the chimney are ill-placed. He never walks into the fields but he finds ground plowed which is fitter for pasture. He is always an enemy to the present fashion. He holds that all the beauty and virtue of women will soon be destroyed by the use of tea. He triumphs when he talks on the present system of education, and tells us with great vehemence, that we are learning words when we should learn things. He is of opinion that we suck in errors at the nurse's breast, and think it extremely ridiculous that children should be taught to use the right-hand rather than the left.

Bob Sturdy considers it as a point of honour to say again what he has once said, and wonders how any man that has been known to alter his opinion, can look his neighbours in the face. Bob is the most formidable disputant of the whole company; for without troubling himself to search for reasons, he tires his

antagonist with repeated affirmations. When Bob has been attacked for an hour with all the powers of eloquence and reason, and his position appears to all but himself utterly untenable, he always closes the debate with his first declaration, introduced by a stout preface of contemptuous civility. 'All this is very judicious; you may talk, Sir, as you please; but I will still say what I said at first.' Bob deals much in universals, which he has now obliged us to let pass without exceptions. He lives on an annuity, and holds that *there are as many thieves as traders*; he is of loyalty unshaken, and always maintains that *he who flies a Jacobite sees a rascal*.

Phil Gentle is an enemy to the rudeness of contradiction and the turbulence of debate. Phil has no notions of his own, and therefore willingly catches from the last speaker such as he shall drop. This flexibility of ignorance is easily accommodated to any tenet; his only difficulty is, when the disputants grow zealous, how to be of two contrary opinions at once. If no appeal is made to his judgment, he has the art of distributing his attention and his smiles in such a manner, that each thinks him of his own party; but if he is obliged to speak, he then observes, that the question is difficult; that he never received so much pleasure from a debate before: that neither of the controvertists could have found his match in any other company; that Mr. Wormwood's assertion is very well supported, and yet there is great force in what Mr. Scruple advanced against it. By this indefinite declaration both are commonly satisfied; for he that has prevailed is in good humour; and he that has felt his own weakness is very glad to have escaped so well. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

ROBIN SPRITELY.

N° LXXXIV. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24.

BIOGRAPHY is, of the various kinds of narrative writing, that which is most eagerly read, and most easily applied to the purposes of life.

In romances, when the wild field of possibility lies open to invention, the incidents may easily be made more numerous, the vicissitudes more sudden, and the events more wonderful; but from

the time of life when fancy begins to be over-ruled by reason and corrected by experience, the most artful tale raises little curiosity when it is known to be false; though it may, perhaps, be sometimes read as a model of a neat or elegant style, not for the sake of knowing what it contains, but how it is written; or those that are weary of themselves, may

may have recourse to it as a pleasing dream, of which, when they awake, they voluntarily dismiss the images from their minds.

The examples and events of history press, indeed, upon the mind with the weight of truth; but when they are repositied in the memory, they are oftener employed for shew than use, and rather diversify conversation than regulate life. Few are engaged in such scenes as give them opportunities of growing wiser by the downfall of statesmen, or the defeat of generals. The stratagems of war, and the intrigues of courts, are read by far the greater part of mankind with the same indifference as the adventures of fabled heroes, or the revolutions of a fairy region. Between falsehood and uselefs truth there is little difference. As gold which he cannot spend will make no man rich, so knowledge which he cannot apply will make no man wise.

The mischievous consequences of vice and folly, of irregular desires and predominant passions, are best discovered by those relations which are levelled with the general surface of life, which tell not how any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he lost the favour of his prince, but how he became discontented with himself.

Those relations are therefore commonly of most value in which the writer tells his own story. He that recounts the life of another, commonly dwells most upon conspicuous events, lessens the familiarity of his tale to increase it's dignity, shews his favourite at a distance decorated and magnified like the antient actors in their tragick dress, and endeavours to hide the man that he may produce a hero.

But if it be true, which was said by a French prince, *that no man was a hero to the servants of his chamber*, it is equally true, that every man is yet less a hero to himself. He that is most elevated above the crowd by the importance of his employments, or the reputation of his genius, feels himself affected by fame or business but as they influence his domestick life. The high and low, as they have the same faculties and the same senses, have no less similitude in their pains and pleasures. The sensations are the same in all, though produced by very different occasions. The prince feels the same pain when an invader seizes a province, as the farmer when a thief drives away his cow. Men

thus equal in themselves will appear equal in honest and impartial biography, and those whom fortune or nature place at the greatest distance may afford instruction to each other.

The writer of his own life has at least the first qualification of an historian, the knowledge of the truth; and though it may be plausibly objected that his temptations to disguise it are equal to his opportunities of knowing it, yet I cannot but think that impartiality may be expected with equal confidence from him that relates the passages of his own life, as from him that delivers the transactions of another.

Certainty of knowledge not only excludes mistake, but fortifies veracity. What we collect by conjecture, and by conjecture only can one man judge of another's motives or sentiments, is easily modified by fancy or desire; as objects imperfectly discerned take forms from the hope or fear of the beholder. But that which is fully known cannot be falsified but with reluctance of understanding and alarm of conscience: of understanding, the lover of truth; of conscience, the sentinel of virtue,

He that writes the life of another is either his friend or his enemy, and wishes either to exalt his praise or aggravate his infamy; many temptations to falsehood will occur in the disguise of passions, too specious to fear much resistance. Love of virtue will animate panegyrick, and hatred of wickedness embitter censure. The zeal of gratitude, the ardour of patriotism, fondness for an opinion, or fidelity to a party, may easily overpower the vigilance of a mind habitually well disposed, and prevail over unassisted and unfriended veracity.

But he that speaks of himself has no motive to falsehood or partiality except self-love, by which all have often been betrayed, that all are on the watch against it's artifices. He that writes an apology for a single action, to confute an accusation, to recommend himself to favour, is indeed always to be suspected of favouring his own cause: but he that sits down calmly and voluntarily to review his life for the admonition of posterity, or to amuse himself, and leaves this account unpublished, may be commonly presumed to tell truth, since falsehood cannot appease his own mind, and fame will not be heard beneath the tomb,

N° LXXXV. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1.

ONE of the peculiarities which distinguish the present age is the multiplication of books. Every day brings new advertisements of literary undertakings, and we are flattered with repeated promises of growing wise on easier terms than our progenitors.

How much either happiness or knowledge is advanced by this multitude of authors, it is not very easy to decide.

He that teaches us any thing which we knew not before, is undoubtedly to be revered as a master. He that conveys knowledge by more pleasing ways may very properly be loved as a benefactor; and he that supplies life with innocent amusement, will be certainly cherished as a pleasing companion.

But few of those who fill the world with books, have any pretensions to the hope either of pleasing or instructing. They have often no other task than to lay two books before them, out of which they compile a third, without any new materials of their own, and with very little application of judgment to those which former authors have supplied.

That all compilations are useless I do not assert. Particles of science are often very widely scattered. Writers of extensive comprehension have incidental remarks upon topics very remote from the principal subject, which are often more valuable than formal treatises, and which yet are not known because they are not promised in the title. He that collects those under proper heads is very laudably employed, for though he exerts no great abilities in the work, he facilitates the progress of others, and by making that easy of attainment which is already written, may give some mind, more vigorous or more adventurous than his own, leisure for new thoughts and original designs.

But the collections poured lately from the presses have been seldom made at any great expence of time or enquiry, and therefore only serve to distract choice without supplying any real want.

It is observed that a *corrupt society has many laws*; I know not whether it is not equally true, than an *ignorant age has many books*. When the treasures of ancient knowledge lie unexamined, and

original authors are neglected and forgotten, compilers and plagiarists are encouraged, who give us again what we had before, and grow great by setting before us what our own sloth had hidden from our view.

Yet are not even these writers to be indiscriminately censured and rejected. Truth like beauty varies its fashions, and is best recommended by different dresses to different minds; and he that recalls the attention of mankind to any part of learning which time has left behind it, may be truly said to advance the literature of his own age. As the manners of nations vary, new topics of persuasion become necessary, and new combinations of imagery are produced; and he that can accommodate himself to the reigning taste, may always have readers who perhaps would not have looked upon better performances.

To exact of every man who writes that he should say something new, would be to reduce authors to a small number; to oblige the most fertile genius to say only what is new, would be to contract his volumes to a few pages. Yet, surely, there ought to be some bounds to repetition; libraries ought no more to be heaped for ever with the same thoughts differently expressed, than with the same books differently decorated.

The good or evil which these secondary writers produce is seldom of any long duration. As they owe their existence to change of fashion, they commonly disappear when a new fashion becomes prevalent. The authors that in any nation last from age to age are very few, because there are very few that have any other claim to notice than that they catch hold on present curiosity, and gratify some accidental desire, or procure some temporary convenience.

But however the writers of the day may despair of future fame, they ought at least to forbear any present mischief. Though they cannot arrive at eminent heights of excellence, they might keep themselves harmless. They might take care to inform themselves before they attempt to inform others, and exert the little influence which they have for honest purposes.

But such is the present state of our literature, that the ancient sage, who thought *a great book a great evil*, would now think the multitude of books a multitude of evils. He would consider a bulky writer who engrossed a year, and

a swarm of pamphleteers who stole each an hour, as equal wasters of human life, and would make no other difference between them, than between a beast of prey, and a flight of locusts.

Nº LXXXVI. SATURDAY, DECEMBER, 8.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,

I Am a young lady newly married to a young gentleman. Our fortune is large, our minds are vacant, our dispositions gay, our acquaintances numerous, and our relations splendid. We considered that marriage, like life, has it's youth, that the first year is the year of gaiety and revel, and resolved to see the shews and feel the joys of London before the increase of our family should confine us to domestick cares and domestick pleasures.

Little time was spent in preparation; the coach was harnessed, and a few days brought us to London, and we alighted at a lodging provided for us by Miss Biddy Trifle, a maiden niece of my husband's father, where we found apartments on a second floor, which my cousin told us would serve us till we could please ourselves with a more commodious and elegant habitation, and which she had taken at a very high price, because it was not worth the while to make a hard bargain for so short a time.

Here I intended to lie concealed till my new cloaths were made, and my new lodging hired; but Miss Trifle had so industriously given notice of our arrival to all her acquaintance, that I had the mortification next day of seeing the door thronged with painted coaches and chairs with coronets, and was obliged to receive all my husband's relations on a second floor.

Inconveniences are often balanced by some advantage; the elevation of my apartments furnished a subject for conversation, which, without some such help, we should have been in danger of wanting. Lady Stately told us how many years had passed since she climbed so many steps. Miss Airy ran to the window, and thought it charming to see the walkers so little in the street; and

Miss Gentle went to try the same experiment, and screamed to find herself so far above the ground.

They all knew that we intended to remove, and therefore all gave me advice about a proper choice. One street was recommended for the purity of it's air, another for it's freedom from noise, another for it's nearness to the Park, another because there was but a step from it to all places of diversion, and another because it's inhabitants enjoyed at once the town and country.

I had civility enough to hear every recommendation with a look of curiosity while it was made, and of acquiescence when it was concluded, but in my heart felt no other desire than to be free from the disgrace of a second floor, and cared little where I should fix, if the apartments were spacious and splendid.

Next day a chariot was hired, and Miss Trifle was dispatched to find a lodging. She returned in the afternoon with an account of a charming place, to which my husband went in the morning to make the contract. Being young and unexperienced, he took with him his friend Ned Quick, a gentleman of great skill in rooms and furniture, who sees, at a single glance, whatever there is to be commended or censured. Mr. Quick, at the first view of the house, declared that it could not be inhabited, for the sun in the afternoon shone with full glare on the windows of the dining-room.

Miss Trifle went out again, and soon discovered another lodging, which Mr. Quick went to survey, and found, that whenever the wind should blow from the east, all the smoke of the city would be driven upon it.

A magnificent set of rooms was then found in one of the streets near Westminster Bridge, which Miss Trifle preferred to any which she had yet seen; but Mr. Quick, having mused upon it for a

time

time, concluded that it would be too much exposed in the morning to the fogs that rise from the river.

Thus Mr. Quick proceeded to give us every day new testimonies of his taste and circumspection; sometimes the street was too narrow for a double range of coaches: sometimes it was an obscure place not inhabited by persons of quality. Some places were dirty, and some crowded; in some houses the furniture was ill suited, and in others the stairs were too narrow. He had such fertility of objections, that Miss Trifle was at last tired, and desisted from all attempts for our accommodation.

In the mean time I have still continued to see my company on a second floor, and am asked twenty times a day when I am to leave those odious lodgings, in which I live tumultuously without pleasure, and expensively without honour.

My husband thinks so highly of Mr. Quick, that he cannot be persuaded to remove without his approbation; and Mr. Quick thinks his reputation raised by the multiplication of difficulties.

In this distress to whom can I have recourse? I find my temper vitiated by daily disappointment, by the sight of pleasures which I cannot partake, and the possession of riches which I cannot enjoy. Dear Mr. Idler, inform my husband that he is trifling away, in superfluous vexation, the few months which custom has appropriated to delight; that matrimonial quarrels are not easily reconciled between those that have no children; that wherever we settle he must always find some inconvenience; but nothing is so much to be avoided as a perpetual state of enquiry and suspense. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

PEGGY HEARTLESS.

N^o LXXXVII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15.

OF what we know not we can only judge by what we know. Every novelty appears more wonderful as it is more remote from any thing with which experience or testimony have hitherto acquainted us, and if it passes further beyond the notions that we have been accustomed to form, it becomes at last incredible.

We seldom consider that human knowledge is very narrow, that national manners are formed by chance, that uncommon conjunctures of causes produce rare effects, or that what is impossible at one time or place may yet happen in another. It is always easier to deny than to enquire. To refuse credit confers for a moment an appearance of superiority, which every little mind is tempted to assume when it may be gained so cheaply as by withdrawing attention from evidence, and declining the fatigue of comparing probabilities. The most pertinacious and vehement demonstrator may be wearied in time by continual negation; and incredulity, which an old poet, in his address to Raleigh, calls *the suit of fools*, obtunds the argument which it cannot answer, as woollocks deaden arrows though they cannot repel them.

Many relations of travellers have been slighted as fabulous, till more fre-

quent voyages have confirmed their veracity; and it may reasonably be imagined, that many ancient historians are unjustly suspected of falsehood, because our own times afford nothing that resembles what they tell.

Had only the writers of antiquity informed us that there was once a nation in which the wife lay down upon the burning pile only to mix her ashes with those of her husband, we should have thought it a tale to be told with that of Endymion's commerce with the moon. Had only a single traveller related that many nations of the earth were black, we should have thought the accounts of Negroes and of the Phoenix equally credible. But of black men the numbers are too great who are now repining under English cruelty, and the custom of voluntary cremation is not yet lost among the ladies of India.

Few narratives will either to men or women appear more incredible than the histories of the Amazons; of female nations of whose constitution it was the essential and fundamental law, to exclude men from all participation either of publick affairs or domestick business; where female armies marched under female captains, female farmers gathered the harvest, female partners danced together,

gether, and female wits diverted one another.

Yet several ages of antiquity have transmitted accounts of the Amazons of Caucasus; and of the Amazons of America, who have given their names to the greatest river in the world. Condemn late found such memorials as can be expected among erratick and unlettered nations, where events are recorded only by tradition, and new swarms settling in the country from time to time, confuse and efface all traces of former times.

To die with husbands, or to live without them, are the two extremes which the prudence and moderation of European ladies have, in all ages, equally declined; they have never been allured to death by the kindness or civility of the politest nations, nor has the roughness and brutality of more savage countries ever provoked them to doom their male associates to irrevocable banishment. The Bohemian matrons are said to have made one short struggle for superiority, but instead of banishing the men, they contented themselves with condemning them to servile offices; and their constitution, thus left imperfect, was quickly overthrown.

There is, I think, no class of English women from whom we are in any danger of Amazonian usurpation. The old maids seem nearest to independence, and most likely to be animated by revenge against masculine authority; they often speak of men with acrimonious vehemence, but it is seldom found that

they have any settled hatred against them, and it is yet more rarely observed that they have any kindness for each other. They will not easily combine in any plot; and if they should ever agree to retire and fortify themselves in castles or in mountains, the sentinel will betray the passes in spite, and the garrison will capitulate upon easy terms, if the besiegers have handsome sword-knots, and are well supplied with fringe and lace.

The gamesters, if they were united, would make a formidable body; and since they consider men only as beings that are to lose their money, they might live together without any wish for the officiousness of gallantry or the delights of diversified conversation. But as nothing would hold them together but the hope of plundering one another, their government would fail from the defect of its principles, the men would need only to neglect them, and they would perish in a few weeks by a civil war.

I do not mean to censure the ladies of England as defective in knowledge or in spirit, when I suppose them unlikely to revive the military honours of their sex. The character of the ancient Amazons was rather terrible than lovely; the hand could not be very delicate that was only employed in drawing the bow and brandishing the battle-axe; their power was maintained by cruelty, their courage was deformed by ferocity, and their example only shews that men and women live best together.

N° LXXXVIII. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22.

WHEN the philosophers of the last age were first congregated into the Royal Society, great expectations were raised of the sudden progress of useful arts; the time was supposed to be near when engines should turn by a perpetual motion, and health be secured by the universal medicine; when learning should be facilitated by a real character, and commerce extended by ships which could reach their ports in defiance of the tempest.

But improvement is naturally slow. The society met and parted without any visible diminution of the miseries of life. The gout and stone were still painful, the ground that was not plowed brought

no harvest, and neither oranges nor grapes would grow upon the hawthorn. At last, those who were disappointed began to be angry; those likewise who hated innovation were glad to gain an opportunity of ridiculing men who had depreciated, perhaps with too much arrogance, the knowledge of antiquity. And it appears from some of their earliest apologies, that the philosophers felt with great sensibility the unwelcome importunities of those who were daily asking, 'What have ye done?'

The truth is, that little had been done compared with what fame had been suffered to promise; and the question could only be answered by general apolo-

logia

logies and by new hopes, which, when they were frustrated, gave a new occasion to the same vexatious enquiry.

This fatal question has disturbed the quiet of many other minds. He that in the latter part of his life too strictly enquires what he has done, can very seldom receive from his own heart such an account as will give him satisfaction.

We do not indeed so often disappoint others as ourselves. We not only think more highly than others of our own abilities, but allow ourselves to form hopes which we never communicate, and please our thoughts with employments which none ever will allot us, and with elevations to which we are never expected to rise; and when our days and years have passed away in common business or common amusements, and we find at last that we have suffered our purposes to sleep till the time of action is past, we are reproached only by our own reflections; neither our friends nor our enemies wonder that we live and die like the rest of mankind; that we live without notice, and die without memorial; they know not what task we had proposed, and therefore cannot discern whether it is finished.

He that compares what he has done with what he has left undone, will feel the effect which must always follow the comparison of imagination with reality; he will look with contempt on his own unimportance, and wonder to what purpose he came into the world; he will repine that he shall leave behind him no evidence of his having been, that he has added nothing to the system of life, but

has glided from youth to age among the crowd, without any effort for distinction.

Man is seldom willing to let fall the opinion of his own dignity, or to believe that he does little only because every individual is a very little being. He is better content to want diligence than power, and sooner confesses the depravity of his will than the imbecility of his nature.

From this mistaken notion of human greatness it proceeds, that many who pretend to have made great advances in wisdom so loudly declare that they despise themselves. If I had ever found any of the self-contemners much irritated or pained by the consciousness of their meanness, I should have given them consolation by observing, that a little more than nothing is as much as can be expected from a being who with respect to the multitudes about him is himself little more than nothing. Every man is obliged by the supreme Master of the universe to improve all the opportunities of good which are afforded him, and to keep in continual activity such abilities as are bestowed upon him. But he has no reason to repine, though his abilities are small and his opportunities few. He that has improved the virtue or advanced the happiness of one fellow-creature, he that has ascertained a single moral proposition, or added one useful experiment to natural knowledge, may be contented with his own performance, and, with respect to mortals like himself, may demand, like Augustus, to be dismissed at his departure with applause.

Nº LXXXIX. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29.

Ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἀνθρώπου.

EPICŮR.

HOW evil came into the world; for what reason it is that life is overspread with such boundless varieties of misery; why the only thinking being of this globe is doomed to think merely to be wretched, and to pass his time from youth to age in fearing or in suffering calamities, is a question which philosophers have long asked, and which philosophy could never answer.

Religion informs us that misery and sin were produced together. The de-

pravation of human will was followed by a disorder of the harmony of nature; and by that providence which often places antidotes in the neighbourhood of poisons, vice was checked by misery, lest it should swell to universal and unlimited dominion.

A state of innocence and happiness is so remote from all that we have ever seen, that though we can easily conceive it possible, and may therefore hope to attain it, yet our speculations

upon

upon it must be general and confused. We can discover that where there is universal innocence, there will probably be universal happiness; for why should afflictions be permitted to insect beings who are not in danger of corruption from blessings, and where there is no use of terror nor cause of punishment? But in a world like ours, where our senses assault us, and our hearts betray us, we should pass on from crime to crime, heedless and remorseless, if misery did not stand in our way, and our own pains admonish us of our folly.

Almost all the moral good which is left among us, is the apparent effect of physical evil.

Goodness is divided by divines into soberness, righteousness, and godliness. Let it be examined how each of these duties would be practised if there were no physical evil to enforce it.

Sobriety, or temperance, is nothing but the forbearance of pleasure; and if pleasure was not followed by pain, who would forbear it? We see every hour those in whom the desire of present indulgence overpowers all sense of past and all foresight of future misery. In a remission of the gout the drunkard returns to his wine, and the glutton to his feast; and if neither disease nor poverty were felt or dreaded, every one would sink down in idle sensuality, without any care of others, or of himself. To eat and drink, and lie down to sleep, would be the whole business of mankind.

Righteousness, or the system of social duty, may be subdivided into justice and charity. Of justice one of the heathen sages has shewn with great acuteness, that it was impressed upon mankind only by the inconveniences which injustice had produced. 'In the first ages,' says he, 'men acted without any rule but the impulse of desire, they practised injustice upon others, and suffered it from others, in their turn; but in time it was discovered, that the pain of suffering wrong was greater than the pleasure of doing it; and mankind, by a general compact, submitted to the restraint of laws, and resigned the pleasure to escape the pain.'

Of Charity it is superfluous to observe, that it could have no place if there were no want, for of a virtue which could not be practised, the omission could not

be culpable. Evil is not only the occasional but the efficient cause of charity; we are incited to the relief of misery by the consciousness that we have the same nature with the sufferer, that we are in danger of the same distresses, and may sometime implore the same assistance.

Godliness, or piety, is elevation of the mind towards the Supreme Being, and extension of the thoughts of another life. The other life is future, and the Supreme Being is invisible. None would have recourse to an invisible power, but that all other subjects had eluded their hopes. None would fix their attention upon the future, but that they are discontented with the present. If the senses were feasted with perpetual pleasure, they would always keep the mind in subjection. Reason has no authority over us, but by its power to warn us against evil.

In childhood, while our minds are yet unoccupied, religion is impressed upon them, and the first years of almost all who have been well educated are passed in a regular discharge of the duties of piety. But as we advance forward into the crowds of life, innumerable delights solicit our inclinations, and innumerable cares distract our attention; the time of youth is passed in noisy frolics; manhood is led on from hope to hope, and from project to project; the dissoluteness of pleasure, the inebriation of success, the ardour of expectation, and the vehemence of competition, chain down the mind alike to the present scene; nor is it remembered how soon this mist of trifles must be scattered, and the bubbles that float upon the rivulet of life be lost for ever in the gulph of eternity. To this consideration scarce any man is awakened but by some pressing and relentless evil. The death of those from whom he derived his pleasures, or to whom he destined his possessions, some disease which shews him the vanity of all external acquisitions, or the gloom of age, which intercepts his prospects of long enjoyment, forces him to fix his hopes upon another state, and when he has contended with the tempests of life till his strength fails him, he flies at last to the shelter of religion.

That misery does not make all virtuous, experience too certainly informs us; but is it no less certain that of what virtue there is, misery produces far the greater

greater part. Physical evil may be therefore endured with patience, since it is the cause of moral good, and pa-

tience itself is one virtue by which we are prepared for that state in which evil shall be no more.

Nº XC. SATURDAY, JANUARY 5, 1760.

IT is a complaint which has been made from time to time, and which seems to have lately become more frequent, that English Oratory, however forcible in argument, or elegant in expression, is deficient and inefficacious, because our speakers want the grace and energy of action.

Among the numerous projectors who are desirous to refine our manners, and improve our faculties, some are willing to supply the deficiency of our speakers. We have had more than one exhortation to study the neglected art of moving the passions, and have been encouraged to believe that our tongues, however feeble in themselves, may, by the help of our hands and legs, obtain an incontrollable dominion over the most stubborn audience, animate the insensible, engage the careless, force tears from the obdurate, and money from the avaricious.

If by flight of hand, or nimbleness of foot, all these wonders can be performed, he that shall neglect to attain the free use of his limbs may be justly censured as criminally lazy. But I am afraid that no specimen of such effects will easily be shewn. If I could once find a speaker in Change-Alley raising the price of stocks by the power of persuasive gestures, I should very zealously recommend the study of his art; but having never seen any action by which language was much assisted, I have been hitherto inclined to doubt whether my countrymen are not blamed too hastily for their calm and motionless utterance.

Foreigners of many nations accompany their speech with action; but why should their example have more influence upon us than ours upon them? Customs are not to be changed but for better. Let those who desire to reform us shew the benefits of the change proposed. When the Frenchman waves his hands and writhes his body in recounting the revolutions of a game at cards, or the Neapolitan, who tells the hour of the day, shews upon his fingers the number which he mentions, I do not per-

ceive that their manual exercise is of much use, or that they leave any image more deeply impressed by their bustle and vehemence of communication.

Upon the English stage there is no want of action; but the difficulty of making it at once various and proper, and it's perpetual tendency to become ridiculous, notwithstanding all the advantages which art and show, and custom and prejudice, can give it, may prove how little it can be admitted into any other place, where it can have no recommendation but from truth and nature.

The use of English oratory is only at the bar, in the parliament, and in the church. Neither the judges of our laws nor the representatives of our people would be much affected by laboured gesticulation, or believe any man the more because he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or spread abroad his arms, or stamped the ground, or thumped his breast, or turned his eyes sometimes to the ceiling and sometimes to the floor. Upon men intent only upon truth, the arm of an orator has little power; a credible testimony, or a cogent argument, will overcome all the art of modulation, and all the violence of contortion.

It is well known that in the city which may be called the Parent of Oratory, all the arts of mechanical persuasion were banished from the court of supreme judicature. The judges of the Areopagus considered action and vociferation as a foolish appeal to the external senses, and unworthy to be practised before those who had no desire of idle amusement, and whose only pleasure was to discover right.

Whether action may not yet be of use in churches, where the preacher addresses a mingled audience, may deserve enquiry. It is certain that the senses are more powerful as the reason is weaker; and that he whose ears convey little to his mind, may sometimes listen with his eyes till truth may gradually take possession of his heart. If there be any use of gesticulation, it must be applied to the ignorant and rude, who will be more

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affected by vehemence than delighted by propriety. In the pulpit little action can be proper, for action can illustrate nothing but that to which it may be referred by nature or by custom. He that imitates by his hand a motion which he describes, explains it by natural similitude; he that lays his hand on his breast, when he expresses pity, enforces his words by a customary illusion. But theology has few topicks to which action can be appropriated; that action which is vague and indeterminate, will at last settle into habit, and habitual peculiarities are quickly ridiculous.

It is perhaps the character of the English to despise trifles; and that art may surely be accounted a trifle which is at once useless and ostentatious, which can seldom be practised with propriety, and which as the mind is more cultivated, is less powerful. Yet as all innocent means are to be used for the propagation of truth, I would not deter those who are employed in preaching to common congregations from any practice which they may find persuasive; for, compared with the conversion of sinners, propriety and elegance are less than nothing.

Nº XCI. SATURDAY, JANUARY 12.

IT is common to overlook what is near, by keeping the eye fixed upon something remote. In the same manner present opportunities are neglected, and attainable good is slighted, by minds busied in extensive ranges, and intent upon future advantages. Life, however short, is made still shorter by waste of time, and its progress towards happiness, though naturally slow, is yet retarded by unnecessary labour.

The difficulty of obtaining knowledge is universally confessed. To fix deeply in the mind the principles of science, to settle their limitations, and deduce the long succession of their consequences; to comprehend the whole compass of complicated systems, with all the arguments, objections, and solutions, and to reposit in the intellectual treasury the numberless facts, experiments, apophthegms, and positions, which must stand single in the memory, and of which none has any perceptible connection with the rest, is a task which, though undertaken with ardor and pursued with diligence, must at last be left unfinished by the frailty of our nature.

To make the way to learning either less short, or less smooth is certainly absurd; yet this is the apparent effect of the prejudice which seems to prevail among us in favour of foreign authors, and of the contempt of our native literature, which this excursive curiosity must necessarily produce. Every man is more speedily instructed by his own language than by any other; before we search the rest of the world for teachers, let us try whether we may not spare our trouble by finding them at home.

The riches of the English language are much greater than they are commonly supposed. Many useful and valuable books lie buried in shops and libraries, unknown and unexamined; unless some lucky compiler opens them by chance, and finds an easy spoil of wit and learning. I am far from intending to insinuate, that other languages are not necessary to him who aspires to eminence, and whose whole life is devoted to study; but to him who reads only for amusement, or whose purpose is not to deck himself with the honours of literature, but to be qualified for domestick usefulness, and sit down content with subordinate reputation, we have authors sufficient to fill up all the vacancies of his time, and gratify most of his wishes for information.

Of our poets I need say little, because they are perhaps the only authors to whom their country has done justice. We consider the whole succession from Spenser to Pope, as superior to any name which the continent can boast; and therefore the poets of other nations, however familiarly they may be sometimes mentioned, are very little read except by those who design to borrow their beauties.

There is, I think, not one of the liberal arts which may not be competently learned in the English language. He that searches after mathematical knowledge may busy himself among his own countrymen, and will find one or other able to instruct him in every part of those abstruse sciences. He that is delighted with experiments, and wishes to know the nature of bodies from certain and visible

visible effects, is happily placed where the mechanical philosophy was first established by a public institution, and from which it was spread to all other countries.

The more airy and elegant studies of Philology and Criticism have little need of any foreign help. Though our language, not being very analogical, gives few opportunities for grammatical researches, yet we have not wanted authors who have considered the principles of speech: and with critical writings we abound sufficiently to enable Pedantry to impose rules which can seldom be observed, and Vanity to talk of books which are seldom read.

But our own language has, from the Reformation to the present time, been chiefly dignified and adorned by the works of our divines, who, considered as commentators, controvertists, or preachers, have undoubtedly left all other nations far behind them. No vulgar language can boast such treasures of theological knowledge, or such multitudes of authors at once learned, elegant, and pious. Other countries and other communions have authors perhaps equal in abilities and diligence to ours;

but if we unite number with excellence, there is certainly no nation which must not allow us to be superior. Of Morality little is necessary to be said, because it is comprehended in practical divinity, and is perhaps better taught in English sermons than in any other books ancient or modern. Nor shall I dwell on our excellence in metaphysical speculations, because he that reads the works of our divines will easily discover how far human subtilty has been able to penetrate.

Political knowledge is forced upon us by the form of our constitution, and all the mysteries of government are discovered in the attack or defence of every minister. The original law of society, the rights of subjects, and the prerogatives of kings, have been considered with the utmost nicety, sometimes profoundly investigated, and sometimes familiarly explained.

Thus copiously instructive is the English language, and thus needless is all recourse to foreign writers. Let us not therefore make our neighbours proud by soliciting help which we do not want, nor discourage our own industry by difficulties which we need not suffer,

Nº XCII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 19.

WHATEVER is useful or honourable will be desired by many who never can obtain it; and that which cannot be obtained when it is desired, artifice or folly will be diligent to counterfeit. Those to whom fortune has denied gold and diamonds decorate themselves with stones and metals, which have something of the show but little of the value; and every moral excellence or intellectual faculty has some vice or folly which imitates it's appearance.

Every man wishes to be wise, and they who cannot be wise are almost always cunning. The less is the real discernment of those whom business or conversation brings together, the more illusions are practised, nor is caution ever so necessary as with associates or opponents of feeble minds.

Cunning differs from wisdom as twilight from open day. He that walks in the sunshine goes boldly forward by the nearest way; he sees that where the

path is straight and even he may proceed in security, and where it is rough and crooked he easily complies with the turns and avoids the obstructions. But the traveller in the dusk fears more as he sees less: he knows there may be danger, and therefore suspects that he is never safe, tries every step before he fixes his foot, and shrinks at every noise lest violence should approach him. Wisdom comprehends at once the end and the means, estimates easiness or difficulty, and is cautious or confident in due proportion. Cunning discovers little at a time, and has no other means of certainty than multiplication of stratagems and superfluity of suspicion. The man of cunning always considers that he can never be too safe, and therefore always keeps himself enveloped in a mist, impenetrable, as he hopes, to the eye of rivalry or curiosity.

Upon this principle, Tom Double has formed a habit of eluding the most

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harmless question. What he has no inclination to answer, he pretends sometimes not to hear, and endeavours to divert the enquirer's attention by some other subject; but if he be pressed hard by repeated interrogation, he always evades a direct reply. Ask him whom he likes best on the stage, he is ready to tell that there are several excellent performers. Enquire when he was last at the coffee-house, he replies, that the weather has been bad lately. Desire him to tell the age of any of his acquaintance, he immediately mentions another who is older or younger.

Will Puzzle values himself upon a long reach. He foresees every thing before it will happen, though he never relates his prognostications till the event is past. Nothing has come to pass for these twenty years of which Mr. Puzzle had not given broad hints, and told at least that it was not proper to tell. Of those predictions, which every conclusion will equally verify, he always claims the credit, and wonders that his friends did not understand them. He supposes very truly that much may be known which he knows not, and therefore pretends to know much of which he and all mankind are equally ignorant. I desired his opinion yesterday of the German war, and was told, that if the Prussians were well supported, something great may be expected; but that they have very powerful enemies to encounter; that the Austrian general has long experience, and the Russians are hardy and resolute; but that no human power is invincible. I then drew the conversation to our own affairs, and invited him to balance the probabilities of war and peace; he told me that war requires courage, and negotiation judgment, and that the time will come when it will be seen whether our skill in treaty is equal to our bravery

in battle. To this general prattle he will appeal hereafter, and will demand to have his foresight applauded, whoever shall at last be conquered or victorious.

With Ned Smuggle all is a secret. He believes himself watched by observation and malignity on every side, and rejoices in the dexterity by which he has escaped snares that never were laid. Ned holds that a man is never deceived if he never trusts, and therefore will not tell the name of his taylor or his hatter; he rides out every morning for the air, and pleases himself with thinking that nobody knows where he has been; when he dines with a friend he never goes to his house the nearest way, but walks up a bye-street to perplex the scent. When he has a coach called, he never tells him at the door the true place to which he is going, but stops him in the way that he may give him directions where nobody can hear him. The price of what he buys or sells is always concealed. He often takes lodgings in the country by a wrong name, and thinks that the world is wondering where he can be hid. All these transactions he registers in a book, which, he says, will some time or other amaze posterity.

It is remarked by Bacon, that many men try to procure reputation only by objections, of which, if they are once admitted, the nullity never appears, because the design is laid aside. 'This false feint of wisdom,' says he, 'is the ruin of business.' The whole power of cunning is privative; to say nothing and to do nothing, is the utmost of it's reach. Yet men thus narrow by nature, and mean by art, are sometimes able to rise by the miscarriages of bravery and the openness of integrity; and by watching failures and snatching opportunities, obtain advantages which belong properly to higher characters.

Nº XCIII. SATURDAY, JANUARY 26.

SAM Softly was bred a sugar-baker; but succeeding to a considerable estate on the death of his elder brother, he retired early from business, married a fortune, and settled in a country house near Kentish Town. Sam, who formerly was a sportsman, and in his apprenticeship used to frequent Barnet races, keeps a high chaise, with a brace of

seasoned geldings. During the summer months, the principal passion and employment of Sam's life is to visit, in this vehicle, the most eminent seats of the nobility and gentry in different parts of the kingdom, with his wife and select friends. By these periodical excursions Sam gratifies many important purposes. He assists the several pro-

nancies of his wife; he shews his chaife to the best advantage; he indulges his insatiable curiosity, for finery, which, since he has turned gentleman, has grown upon him to an extraordinary degree; he discovers taste and spirit; and, what is above all, he finds frequent opportunities of displaying to the party, at every house he sees, his knowledge of family connections. At first, Sam was contented with driving a friend between London and his villa. Here he prided himself in pointing out the boxes of the citizens on each side of the road, with an accurate detail of their respective failures or successes in trade: and harangued on the several equipages that were accidentally passing. Here, too, the seats, intersperied on the surrounding hills, afforded ample matter for Sam's curious discoveries. For one, he told his companion, a rich Jew had offered money; and that a retired widow was courted at another, by an eminent dry-salter. At the same time he discussed the utility and enumerated the expenses of the Islington turnpike. But Sam's ambition is at present raised to nobler undertakings.

When the happy hour of the annual expedition arrives, the seat of the chaife is furnished with *Ogilby's Book of Roads*, and a choice quantity of cold tongues. The most alarming disaster which can happen to our hero, who thinks he *throws a whip* admirably well, is to be overtaken in a road which affords no quarter for wheels. Indeed few men possess more skill or discernment for concerting and conducting a party of pleasure. When a seat is to be surveyed, he has a peculiar talent at selecting some shady bench in the Park, where the company may most commodiously refresh themselves with cold tongue, chicken, and French rolls; and is very sagacious in discovering what cool temple in the garden will be best adapted for drinking tea, brought for this purpose in the at-

ternoon, and from which the chaife may be resumed with the greatest convenience. In viewing the house itself, he is principally attracted by the chairs and beds, concerning the cost of which his minute enquiries generally gain the clearest information. An agate table easily diverts his eyes from the most capital strokes of Rubens, and a Turkey carpet has more charms than a Titian. Sam, however, dwells with some attention on the family portraits, particularly the most modern ones; and as this is a topic on which the house-keeper usually harangues in a more copious manner, he takes this opportunity of improving his knowledge of inter-marriages. Yet notwithstanding this appearance of satisfaction, Sam has some objections to all he sees. One house has too much gilding; at another, the chimney-pieces are all monuments; at a third, he conjectures that the beautiful canal must certainly be dried up in a hot summer. He despises the statues at Wilton, because he thinks he can see much better carving at Westminster Abbey. But there is one general objection which he is sure to make at almost every house, particularly at those which are most distinguished. He allows that all the apartments are extremely fine, but adds, with a sneer, that they are too fine to be inhabited.

Misapplied genius most commonly proves ridiculous. Had Sam, as Nature intended, contentedly continued in the calmer and less conspicuous pursuits of sugar-baking, he might have been a respectable and useful character. At present he dissipates his life in a specious idleness, which neither improves himself nor his friends. Those talents which might have benefited society, he exposes to contempt by false pretensions. He affects pleasures which he cannot enjoy, and is acquainted only with those subjects on which he has no right to talk, and which it is no merit to understand.

Nº XCIV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2.

IT is common to find young men ardent and diligent in the pursuit of knowledge; but the progress of life very often produces laxity and indifference, and not only those who are at liberty to chuse their business and amusements,

but those likewise whose professions engage them in literary enquiries, pass the latter part of their time without improvement, and spend the day rather in any other entertainment than that which they might find among their books.

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This abatement of the vigour of curiosity is sometimes imputed to the insufficiency of Learning. Men are supposed to remit their labours, because they find their labours to have been vain; and to search no longer after truth and wisdom, because they at last despair of finding them.

But this reason is for the most part very falsely assigned. Of Learning, as of virtue, it may be affirmed, that it is at once honoured and neglected. Whoever forsakes it will for ever look after it with longing, lament the loss which he does not endeavour to repair, and desire the good which he wants resolution to seize and keep. The Idler never applauds his own idleness, nor does any man repent of the diligence of his youth.

So many hindrances may obstruct the acquisition of knowledge, that there is little reason for wondering that it is in a few hands. To the greater part of mankind the duties of life are inconsistent with much study, and the hours which they would spend upon letters must be stolen from their occupations and their families. Many suffer themselves to be lured by more spritely and luxurious pleasures from the shades of contemplation, where they find seldom more than a calm delight, such as, though greater than all others, it's certainty, and it's duration being reckoned with it's power of gratification, is yet easily quitted for some extemporary joy, which the present moment offers, and another perhaps will put out of reach.

It is the great excellence of Learning, that it borrows very little from time or place; it is not confined to season or to climate, to cities or to the country, but may be cultivated and enjoyed where no other pleasure can be obtained. But this quality, which constitutes much of it's value, is one occasion of neglect; what may be done at all times with equal propriety, is deferred from day to day, till the mind is gradually reconciled to the omission, and the attention is turned to other objects. Thus habitual idleness

gains too much power to be conquered, and the soul shrinks from the idea of intellectual labour and intenseness of meditation.

That those who profess to advance Learning sometimes obstruct it, cannot be denied; the continual multiplication of books not only distracts choice, but disappoints enquiry. To him that has moderately stored his mind with images, few writers afford any novelty; or what little they have to add to the common stock of Learning is so buried in the mafs of general notions, that, like silver mingled with the ore of lead, it is too little to pay for the labour of separation; and he that has often been deceived by the promise of a title, at last grows weary of examining, and is tempted to consider all as equally fallacious.

There are indeed some repetitions always lawful, because they never deceive. He that writes the history of past times, undertakes only to decorate known facts by new beauties of method or of style, or at most to illustrate them by his own reflections. The author of a system, whether moral or physical, is obliged to nothing beyond care of selection and regularity of disposition. But there are others who claim the name of authors merely to disgrace it, and fill the world with volumes only to bury letters in their own rubbish. The traveller who tells, in a pompous folio, that he saw the Pantheon at Rome, and the Medicæan Venus at Florence; the natural historian who, describing the productions of a narrow island, recounts all that it has in common with every other part of the world; the collector of antiquities, that accounts every thing a curiosity which the ruins of Herculaneum happen to emit, though an instrument already shewn in a thousand repositories, or a cup common to the ancients, the moderns, and all mankind, may be justly censured as the persecutors of students, and the thieves of that time which never can be restored,

N^o XCV. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9.

TO THE IDLER.

MR. IDLER,

IT is, I think, universally agreed, that seldom any good is gotten by complaint; yet we find that few forbear to complain, but those who are afraid of being reproached as the authors of their own miseries. I hope therefore for the common permission, to lay my case before you and your readers, by which I shall disburthen my heart, though I cannot hope to receive either assistance or consolation.

I am a trader, and owe my fortune to frugality and industry. I began with little; but by the easy and obvious method of spending less than I gain, I have every year added something to my stock, and expect to have a seat in the common-council at the next election.

My wife, who was as prudent as myself, died six years ago, and left me one son and one daughter, for whose sake I resolved never to marry again, and rejected the overtures of Mrs. Squeeze, the broker's widow, who had ten thousand pounds at her own disposal.

I bred my son at a school near Islington, and when he had learned arithmetic, and wrote a good hand, I took him into the shop, designing, in about ten years, to retire to Stratford or Hackney, and leave him established in the business.

For four years he was diligent and sedate, entered the shop before it was opened, and when it was shut, always examined the pins of the window. In any intermission of business it was his constant practice to peruse the Ledger. I had always great hopes of him, when I observed how sorrowfully he would shake his head over a bad debt, and how eagerly he would listen to me when I told him that he might, at one time or other, become an alderman.

We lived together with mutual confidence, till unluckily a visit was paid him by two of his school-fellows, who were placed, I suppose, in the army because they were fit for nothing better: they came glittering in the military dress, recited their old acquaintance, and invited him to a tavern, where, as I have

been since informed, they ridiculed the meanness of commerce, and wondered how a youth of spirit could spend the prime of life behind a counter.

I did not suspect any mischief. I knew my son was never without money in his pocket, and was better able to pay his reckoning than his companions, and expected to see him return triumphing in his own advantages, and congratulating himself that he was not one of those who expose their heads to a musquet bullet for three shillings a day.

He returned sullen and thoughtful; I supposed him sorry for the hard fortune of his friends, and tried to comfort him by saying that the war would soon be at an end, and that if they had any honest occupation, half-pay would be a pretty help. He looked at me with indignation; and snatching up his candle, told me, as he went up the stairs, that *he hoped to see a battle yet.*

Why he should hope to see a battle I could not conceive, but let him go quietly to sleep away his folly. Next day he made two mistakes in the first bill, disobliterated a customer by surly answers, and dated all his entries in the Journal in a wrong month. At night he met his military companions again, came home late, and quarrelled with the maid.

From this fatal interview he has gradually lost all his laudable passions and desires. He soon grew useless in the shop, where, indeed, I did not willingly trust him any longer; for he often mistook the price of goods to his own loss, and once gave a promissory note instead of a receipt.

I did not know to what degree he was corrupted, till an honest taylor gave me notice that he had bespoke a laced suit, which was to be left for him at a house kept by the sister of one of my journey-men. I went to this clandestine lodging, and found, to my amazement, all the ornaments of a fine gentleman, which he has taken upon credit, or purchased with money subducted from the shop.

This detection has made him desperate. He now openly declares his resolution to be a gentleman; says that his soul is too great for a counting-house; and

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ridicules the conversation of city taverns; talks of new plays, and boxes, and ladies; gives dutchesses for his toasts; carries silver; for readiness, in his waistcoat-pocket; and comes home at night in a chair, with such thunders at the door, as have more than once brought the watchmen from their stands.

Little expences will not hurt us; and I could forgive a few juvenile frolicks, if he would be careful of the main; but his favourite topick is contempt of money, which, he says, is of no use but to be spent. Riches, without honour, he holds empty things; and once told me to my face, that wealthy plodders were only purveyors for men of spirit.

He is always impatient in the company of his old friends, and seldom speaks till he is warmed with wine; he then entertains us with accounts that we do not desire to hear, of intrigues among lords and ladies, and quarrels between officers

of the guards; shews a miniature on his snuff-box, and wonders that any man can look upon the new dancer without rapture.

All this is very provoking, and yet all this might be borne, if the boy could support his pretensions. But whatever he may think, he is yet far from the accomplishments which he has endeavoured to purchase at so dear a rate. I have watched him in publick places. He sneaks in like a man that knows he is where he should not be; he is proud to catch the slightest salutation, and often claims it when it is not intended. Other men receive dignity from drefs, but any booby looks always more meanly for his finery. Dear Mr. Idler, tell him what must at last become of a fop, whose pride will not suffer to be a trader, and whom long habits in a shop forbid to be a gentleman. I am, Sir, &c.

TIM. WAINSCOT.

Nº XCVI. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16.

HACHO, a king of Lapland, was in his youth the most renowned of all the northern warriors. His martial achievements remain engraven on a pillar of flint in the rocks of Hanga, and are to this day solemnly carolled to the harp by the Laplanders, at the fires with which they celebrate their nightly festivities. Such was his intrepid spirit, that he ventured to pass the lake Vether to the Isle of Wizards, where he descended alone into the dreary vault in which a magician had been kept bound for six ages, and read the Gothick characters inscribed on his brazen mace. His eye was so piercing, that, as ancient chronicles report, he could blunt the weapons of his enemies only by looking at them. At twelve years of age, he carried an iron vessel of a prodigious weight, for the length of five furlongs, in the presence of all the chiefs of his father's castle.

Nor was he less celebrated for his prudence and wisdom. Two of his proverbs are yet remembered and repeated among the Laplanders. To express the vigilance of the Supreme Being, he was wont to say—'Odin's belt is always buckled.' To shew that the most prosperous condition of life is often hazardous, his lesson was—'When you

'slide on the smoothest ice, beware of pits beneath.' He consoled his countrymen, when they were once preparing to leave the frozen deserts of Lapland, and resolved to seek some warmer climate, by telling them, that the eastern nations, notwithstanding their boasted fertility, passed every night amidst the horrors of anxious apprehension, and were inexpressibly affrighted and almost stunned, every morning, with the noise of the sun while he was rising.

His temperance and severity of manners were his chief praise. In his early years he never tasted wine; nor would he drink out of a painted cup. He constantly slept in his armour, with his spear in his hand; nor would he use a battle-axe whose handle was inlaid with brass. He did not, however, persevere in this contempt of luxury; nor did he close his days with honour.

One evening, after hunting the Gulbo or wild-dog, being bewildered in a solitary forest, and having passed the fatigues of the day without any interval of refreshment, he discovered a large mass of honey in the hollow of a pine. This was a dainty which he had never tasted before, and being at once faint and hungry, he fed greedily upon it. From this unusual and delicious repast he recovered

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W. Harvey del.

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so much satisfaction, that, at his return home, he commanded honey to be served up at his table every day. His palate, by degrees, became refined and vitiated; he began to lose his native relish for simple fare, and contracted a habit of indulging himself in delicacies; he ordered the delightful gardens of his castle to be thrown open, in which the most luscious fruits had been suffered to ripen and decay, unobserved and untouched, for many revolving autumns, and gratified his appetite with luxurious desserts. At length he found it expedient to introduce wine, as an agreeable improvement, or a necessary ingredient, to his new way of living; and having once tasted it, he was tempted by little and little, to give a loose to the excesses of intoxication. His general simplicity of life was changed; he perfumed his apartments by burning the wood of the most aromatick fir, and commanded his helmet to be ornamented with beautiful rows of the teeth of the rein-deer. Indolence and effeminacy stole upon him by pleasing and imperceptible gradations, relaxed the sinews of his resolution, and extinguished his thirst of military glory.

While Hacho was thus immersed in pleasure and in repose, it was reported to him, one morning, that the preceding night a disastrous omen had been discovered, and that bats and hideous

birds had drank up the oil which nourished the perpetual lamp in the temple of Odin. About the same time, a messenger arrived to tell him, that the king of Norway had invaded his kingdom with a formidable army. Hacho, terrified as he was with the omen of the night, and enervated with indulgence, roused himself from his voluptuous lethargy, and recollecting some faint and few sparks of veteran valour, marched forward to meet him. Both armies joined battle in the forest where Hacho had been lost after hunting; and it so happened that the king of Norway challenged him to single combat, near the place where he had tasted the honey. The Lapland chief, languid and long disused to arms, was soon overpowered; he fell to the ground, and before his insulting adversary struck his head from his body, uttered this exclamation, which the Laplanders still use as an early lesson to their children: 'The vicious man should date his destruction from the first temptation. How justly do I fall a sacrifice to sloth and luxury, in the place where I first yielded to those allurements which seduced me to deviate from temperance and innocence! The honey which I tasted in this forest, and not the hand of the king of Norway, conquers Hacho.'

Nº XCVII. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23.

IT may, I think, be justly observed, that few books disappoint their readers more than the narrations of travellers. One part of mankind is naturally curious to learn the sentiments, manners, and condition of the rest; and every mind that has leisure or power to extend its views, must be desirous of knowing in what proportion Providence has distributed the blessings of nature, or the advantages of art, among the several nations of the earth.

This general desire easily procures readers to every book from which it can expect gratification. The adventurer upon unknown coasts, and the describer of distant regions, is always welcomed as a man who has laboured for the pleasure of others, and who is able to enlarge our knowledge and rectify our opinions; but when the volume is opened, nothing is found but such general accounts as

leave no distinct idea behind them, or such minute enumerations as few can read with either profit or delight.

Every writer of travels should consider, that, like all other authors, he undertakes either to instruct or please, or to mingle pleasure with instruction. He that instructs must offer to the mind something to be imitated, or something to be avoided; he that pleases must offer new images to his reader, and enable him to form a tacit comparison of his own state with that of others.

The greater part of travellers tell nothing, because their method of travelling supplies them with nothing to be told. He that enters a town at night and surveys it in the morning, and then halts away to another place, and guesses at the manners of the inhabitants by the entertainment which his inn afforded him, may please himself for a time

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with a hasty change of scenes, and a confused remembrance of palaces and churches; he may gratify his eye with variety of landscapes; and regale his palate with a succession of vintages; but let him be contented to please himself without endeavour to disturb others. Why should he record excursions by which nothing could be learned, or wish to make a shew of knowledge which, without some power of intuition unknown to other mortals, he never could attain?

Of those who crowd the world with their itineraries, some have no other purpose than to describe the face of the country; those who sit idle at home, and are curious to know what is done or suffered in distant countries, may be informed by one of these wanderers, that on a certain day he set out early with the caravan, and in the first hour's march saw, towards the south, a hill covered with trees, then passed over a stream, which ran northward with a swift course, but which is probably dry in the summer months; that an hour after he saw something to the right which looked at a distance like a castle with towers, but which he discovered afterwards to be a craggy rock; that he then entered a valley, in which he saw several trees tall and flourishing, watered by a rivulet not marked in the maps, of which he was not able to learn the name; that the road afterward grew stony, and the country uneven, where he observed among the hills many hollows worn by torrents, and was told that the road was passable only part of the year; that going on they found the remains of a building, once perhaps a fortress to secure the pass, or to restrain the robbers, of which the present inhabitants can give no other account than that it is haunted by fairies; that they went to dine at the foot of a rock, and travelled the rest of the day along the banks of a river, from which the road turned aside towards evening, and brought them within sight of a vil-

lage, which was once a considerable town, but which afforded them neither good victuals nor commodious lodging.

Thus he conducts his reader through wet and dry, over rough and smooth, without incidents, without reflection; and, if he obtains his company for another day, will dismiss him again at night, equally fatigued with a like succession of rocks and streams, mountains and ruins.

This is the common style of those sons of enterprize, who visit savage countries, and range through solitude and desolation; who pass a desert, and tell that it is sandy; who cross a valley, and find that it is green. There are others of more delicate sensibility, that visit only the realms of elegance and softness; that wander through Italian palaces, and amuse the gentle reader with catalogues of pictures; that hear masses in magnificent churches, and recount the number of the pillars or variegations of the pavement. And there are yet others, who, in disdain of trifles, copy inscriptions elegant and rude, ancient and modern; and transcribe into their book the walls of every edifice, sacred or civil. He that reads these books must consider his labour as it's own reward; for he will find nothing on which attention can fix, or which memory can retain.

He that would travel for the entertainment of others, should remember that the great object of remark is human life. Every nation has something particular in it's manufactures, it's works of genius, it's medicines, it's agriculture, it's customs, and it's policy. He only is a useful traveller, who brings home something by which his country may be benefited; who procures some supply of want or some mitigation of evil, which may enable his readers to compare their condition with that of others, to improve it whenever it is worse, and whenever it is better to enjoy it.

Nº XCVIII. SATURDAY, MARCH 1.

TO THE IDLER.

SIR,
I Am the daughter of a gentleman, who during his life-time enjoyed a small income which arose from a pension from the court, by which he was enabled

to live in a genteel and comfortable manner.

By the situation in life in which he was placed, he was frequently introduced into the company of those of much greater fortunes than his own, among

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whom he was always received with complaisance, and treated with civility.

At six years of age I was sent to a boarding-school in the country, at which I continued till my father's death. This melancholy event happened at a time when I was by no means of sufficient age to manage for myself, while the passions of youth continued unbridled, and before experience could guide my sentiments or my actions.

I was then taken from school by an uncle, to the care of whom my father had committed me on his dying bed. With him I lived several years, and as he was unmarried, the management of his family was committed to me. In this character I always endeavoured to acquit myself, if not with applause, at least without censure.

At the age of twenty-one a young gentleman of some fortune paid his addresses to me, and offered me terms of marriage. This proposal I should readily have accepted, because from vicinity of residence, and from many opportunities of observing his behaviour, I had in some sort contracted an affection for him. My uncle, for what reason I do not know, refused his consent to this alliance, though it would have been complied with by the father of the young gentleman; and as the future condition of my life was wholly dependent on him, I was not willing to disoblige him; and therefore, though unwillingly, declined the offer.

My uncle, who possessed a plentiful

fortune, frequently hinted to me in conversation, that at his death I should be provided for in such a manner that I should be able to make my future life comfortable and happy. As this promise was often repeated, I was the less anxious about any provision for myself. In a short time my uncle was taken ill, and though all possible means were made use of for his recovery, in a few days he died.

The sorrow arising from the loss of a relation, by whom I had been always treated with the greatest kindness, however grievous, was not the worst of my misfortunes. As he enjoyed an almost uninterrupted state of health, he was the less mindful of his dissolution, and died intestate; by which means his whole fortune devolved to a nearer relation, the heir at law.

Thus excluded from all hopes of living in the manner with which I have so long flattered myself, I am doubtful what method I shall take to procure a decent maintenance. I have been educated in a manner that has set me above a state of servitude, and my situation renders me unfit for the company of those with whom I have hitherto conversed. But, though disappointed in my expectations, I do not despair. I will hope that assistance may still be obtained for innocent distress, and that friendship, though rare, is yet not impossible to be found. I am, Sir, your humble servant,

SOPHIA HEEDFUL.

Nº XCIX. SATURDAY, MARCH 8.

AS Ortoarul of Basra was one day wandering along the streets of Bagdad, musing on the varieties of merchandise which the shops offered to his view, and observing the different occupations which busied the multitudes on every side, he was awakened from the tranquillity of meditation by a crowd that obstructed his passage. He raised his eyes, and saw the chief visier, who, having returned from the divan, was entering his palace.

Ortoarul mingled with the attendants, and being supposed to have some petition for the visier, was permitted to enter. He surveyed the spaciousness of the apartments, admired the walls hung with

golden tapestry, and the floors covered with silken carpets, and despised the simple neatness of his own little habitation.

'Surely,' said he to himself, 'this palace is the seat of happiness, where pleasure succeeds to pleasure, and discontent and sorrow can have no admission. Whatever nature has provided for the delight of sense is here spread forth to be enjoyed. What can mortals hope or imagine, which the master of this palace has not obtained? The dishes of luxury cover his table; the voice of harmony lulls him in his bowers; he breathes the fragrance of the groves of Java, and sleeps upon the down of the cygnets of Ganges. He

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speaks,

'speaks, and his mandate is obeyed; he wishes, and his wish is gratified! all whom he sees obey him, and all whom he hears flatter him. How different, Ortogrul, is thy condition, who art doomed to the perpetual torments of unsatisfied desire, and who hast no amusement in thy power that can withhold thee from thy own reflections! They tell thee that thou art wise; but what does wisdom avail with poverty? None will flatter the poor, and the wise have very little power of flattering themselves. That man is surely the most wretched of the sons of wretchedness, who lives with his own faults and follies always before him, and who has none to reconcile him to himself by praise and veneration. I have long sought content, and have not found it; I will from this moment endeavour to be rich.'

Full of his new resolution, he shut himself in his chamber for six months, to deliberate how he should grow rich; he sometimes purposed to offer himself as a counsellor to one of the kings of India, and sometimes resolved to dig for diamonds in the mines of Golconda. One day, after some hours passed in violent fluctuation of opinion, sleep insensibly seized him in his chair; he dreamed that he was ranging a desert country in search of some one that might teach him to grow rich; and as he stood on the top of a hill shaded with cypresses, in doubt whether to direct his steps, his father appeared on a sudden standing before him. 'Ortogrul,' said the old man, 'I know thy perplexity; listen to thy father; turn thine eye on the opposite mountain.' Ortogrul looked, and saw a torrent tumbling down the rocks, roaring with the noise of thunder, and scattering its foam on the impending woods. 'Now,' said his father, 'behold the

valley that lies between the hills.' Ortogrul looked, and espied a little well, out of which issued a small rivulet. 'Tell me now,' said his father, 'dost thou wish for sudden affluence, that may pour upon thee like the mountain torrent, or for a slow and gradual increase, resembling the rill gliding from the well?'—'Let me be quickly rich,' said Ortogrul; 'let the golden stream be quick and violent.'—'Look round thee,' said his father, 'once again.' Ortogrul looked, and perceived the channel of the torrent dry and dusty; but following the rivulet from the well, he traced it to a wide lake, which the supply, slow and constant, kept always full. He waked, and determined to grow rich by silent profit, and preferring industry.

Having sold his patrimony, he engaged in merchandize, and in twenty years purchased lands on which he raised a house, equal in sumptuousness to that of the visier, to which he invited all the ministers of pleasure, expecting to enjoy all the felicity which he had imagined riches able to afford. Leisure soon made him weary of himself, and he longed to be persuaded that he was great and happy. He was courteous and liberal; he gave all that approached him hopes of pleasing him, and all who should please him hopes of being rewarded. Every art of praise was tried, and every source of adulatory fiction was exhausted. Ortogrul heard his flatterers without delight, because he found himself unable to believe them. His own heart told him its frailties, his own understanding reproached him with his faults. 'How long,' said he, with a deep sigh, 'have I been labouring in vain to amass wealth which at last is useless! Let no man hereafter wish to be rich, who is already too wise to be flattered.'

N^O. C. SATURDAY, MARCH 13.

TO THE IDLER.

THE uncertainty and defects of Language have produced very frequent complaints among the learned; yet there still remain many words among us undefined, which are very necessary to be rightly understood, and which pro-

duce very mischievous mistakes when they are erroneously interpreted.

I lived in a state of celibacy beyond the usual time. In the hurry first of pleasure, and afterwards of business, I felt no want of a domestic companion; but becoming weary of labour, I soon grew more weary of idleness, and though



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it reasonable to follow the custom of life, and to seek some solace of my cares in female tenderness, and some amusement of my leisure in female cheerfulness.

The choice which has been long delayed is commonly made at last with great caution. My resolution was, to keep my passions neutral, and to marry only in compliance with my reason. I drew upon a page of my pocket-book a scheme of all female virtues and vices, with the vices which border upon every virtue; and the virtues which are allied to every vice. I considered that wit was farcistical, and magnanimity impetuous; that avarice was economical, and ignorance obsequious; and having estimated the good and evil of every quality, employed my own diligence and that of my friends to find the lady in whom nature and reason had reached that happy mediocrity, which is equally remote from exuberance and deficiency.

Every woman had her admirers and her censurers, and the expectations which one raised were by another quickly depressed: yet there was one in whose favour almost all suffrages concurred. Miss Gentle was universally allowed to be a good sort of woman. Her fortune was not large, but so prudently managed, that she wore finer cloaths and saw more company than many who were known to be twice as rich. Miss Gentle's visits were every where welcome, and whatever family she favoured with her company, she always left behind her such a degree of kindness as recommended her to others; every day extended her acquaintance, and all who knew her declared that they never met with a better sort of woman.

To Miss Gentle I made my addresses, and was received with great equality of temper. She did not in the days of courtship assume the privilege of imposing rigorous commands, or resenting slight offences. If I forgot any of her injunctions, I was gently reminded; if I missed the minute of appointment, I was easily forgiven. I foresaw nothing in marriage but a halcyon calm, and longed for the happiness which was to be found in the inseparable society of a good sort of woman.

The jointure was soon settled by the intervention of friends, and the day came in which Miss Gentle was made mine for ever. The first month was

passed easily enough in receiving and repaying the civilities of our friends. The bride practised with great exactness all the niceties of ceremony, and distributed her notice in the most punctilious proportions to the friends who surrounded us with their happy auguries.

But the time soon came when we were left to ourselves; and were to receive our pleasures from each other, and I then began to perceive that I was not formed to be much delighted by a good sort of woman. Her great principle is, that the orders of a family must not be broken. Every hour of the day has its employment inviolably appropriated, nor will any importunity persuade her to walk in the garden at the time which she has devoted to her needlework, or to sit up stairs in that part of the forenoon which she has accustomed herself to spend in the back parlour. She allows herself to sit half an hour after breakfast, and an hour after dinner; while I am talking or reading to her, she keeps her eye upon her watch, and when the minute of departure comes, will leave an argument unfinished, or the intrigue of a play unravelled. She once called me to supper when I was watching an eclipse, and summoned me at another time to bed when I was going to give directions at a fire.

Her conversation is so habitually cautious, that she never talks to me but in general terms, as to one whom it is dangerous to trust. For discriminations of character she has no names: all whom she mentions are honest men and agreeable women. She smiles not by sensation, but by practice. Her laughter is never excited but by a joke, and her notion of a joke is not very delicate. The repetition of a good joke does not weaken its effect; if she has laughed once, she will laugh again.

She is an enemy to nothing but ill-nature and pride, but she has frequent reason to lament that they are so frequent in the world. All who are not equally pleased with the good and bad, with the elegant and gross, with the witty and the dull, all who distinguish excellence from defect, she considers as ill-natured; and she condemns as proud all who repress impertinence or quell presumption, or expect respect from any other eminence than that of fortune, to which she is always willing to pay homage.

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There are none whom she openly hates; for if once she suffers, or believes herself to suffer, any contempt or insult, she never dismisses it from her mind, but takes all opportunities to tell how easily she can forgive. There are none whom she loves much better than others; for when any of her acquaintance declines in the opinion of the world, she always finds it inconvenient to visit them; her affection continues unaltered, but it is impossible to be intimate with the whole town.

She daily exercises her benevolence by pitying every misfortune that happens to every family within her circle of notice; she is in hourly terrors lest one should catch cold in the rain, and another be frightened by the high wind. Her charity she shews by lamenting that

so many poor wretches should languish in the streets, and by wondering what the great can think on that they do so little good with such large estates.

Her house is elegant and her table dainty, though she has little taste of elegance, and is wholly free from vicious luxury; but she comforts herself that nobody can say that her house is dirty, or that her dishes are not well dressed.

This, Mr. Idler, I have found by long experience to be the character of a good sort of woman, which I have sent you for the information of those by whom a good sort of woman and a good woman may happen to be used as equivalent terms, and who may suffer by the mistake like your humble servant,

TIM WARNER.

N^O CI. SATURDAY, MARCH 22.

OMAR, the son of Hufsan, had passed seventy-five years in honour and prosperity. The favour of three successive Califs had filled his house with gold and silver; and whenever he appeared, the benedictions of the people proclaimed his passage.

Terrestrial happiness is of short continuance. The brightness of the flame is waiting its fuel; the fragrant flower is passing away in its own odours. The vigour of Omar began to fail, the curls of beauty fell from his head, strength departed from his hands, and agility from his feet. He gave back to the Calif the keys of trust and the seals of secrecy, and sought no other pleasure for the remains of life than the converse of the wife, and the gratitude of the good.

The powers of his mind were yet unimpaired. His chamber was filled by visitants, eager to catch the dictates of experience, and officious to pay the tribute of admiration. Caled, the son of the viceroy of Egypt, entered every day early and retired late. He was beautiful and eloquent; Omar admired his wit, and loved his docility. 'Tell me,' said Caled, 'thou to whose voice nations have listened, and whose wisdom is known to the extremities of Asia, tell me how I may resemble Omar the prudent. The arts by which you have gained power and preserved it,

are to you no longer necessary or useful; impart to me the secret of your conduct, and teach me the plan upon which your wisdom has built your fortune.'

'Young man,' said Omar, 'it is of little use to form plans of life. When I took my first survey of the world, in my twentieth year, having considered the various conditions of mankind, in the hour of solitude I said thus to myself, leaning against a cedar which I spread its branches over my head—' Seventy years are allowed to man; I have yet fifty remaining: ten years I will allot to the attainment of knowledge, and ten I will pass in foreign countries; I shall be learned, and therefore shall be honoured; every city will shout at my arrival, and every student will solicit my friendship. Twenty years thus passed will store my mind with images, which I shall be busy through the rest of my life in combining and comparing. I shall revel in inexhaustible accumulations of intellectual riches; I shall find new pleasures for every moment, and shall never more be weary of myself. I will, however, not deviate too far from the beaten track of life, but will try what can be found in female delicacy. I will marry a wife beautiful as the Houries, and wise as Zobeide; with her I will live twenty years

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“ years within the suburbs of Bagdat, in every pleasure that wealth can purchase, and fancy can invent. I will then retire to a rural dwelling, pass my last days in obscurity and contemplation, and lie silently down on the bed of death. Through my life it shall be my settled resolution, that I will never depend upon the smile of princes; that I will never stand exposed to the artifices of courts; I will never pant for publick honours, nor disturb my quiet with affairs of state. Such was my scheme of life, which I impressed indelibly upon my memory.

“ The first part of my ensuing time was to be spent in search of knowledge, and I know not how I was diverted from my design, I had no visible impediments without, nor any ungovernable passions within. I regarded knowledge as the highest honour and the most engaging pleasure; yet day stole upon day, and month glided after month, till I found that seven years of the first ten had vanished, and left nothing behind them. I now postponed my purpose of travelling; for why should I go abroad while so much remained to be learned at home? I immured myself for four years, and studied the laws of the empire. The fame of my skill reached the judges; I was found able to speak upon doubtful questions, and was commanded to stand at the footstool of the Calif. I was heard with attention, I was consulted with confidence, and the love of praise fastened on my heart,

“ I still wished to see distant countries, listened with rapture to the relations of travellers, and resolved some time to ask my dismissal, that I might feast my soul with novelty; but my presence was always necessary, and the stream of business hurried me along. Sometimes I was afraid lest I should be charged with ingratitude; but I still proposed to travel, and therefore would not confine myself by marriage.

“ In my fiftieth year I began to suspect that the time of travelling was past, and thought it best to lay hold on the felicity yet in my power, and indulge myself in domestick pleasures. But at fifty no man easily finds a woman beautiful as the Houries, and wife as Zobeide. I enquired and rejected, consulted and deliberated, till the sixty-second year made me ashamed of gazing upon girls. I had now nothing left but retirement, and for retirement I never found a time, till disease forced me from publick employment.

“ Such was my scheme, and such has been its consequence. With an insatiable thirst for knowledge, I trifled away the years of improvement; with a restless desire of seeing different countries I have always resided in the same city; with the highest expectation of connubial felicity, I have lived unmarried; and with unalterable resolutions of contemplative retirement, I am going to die within the walls of Bagdat.”

Nº CII, SATURDAY, MARCH 29.

IT very seldom happens to man that his business is his pleasure. What is done from necessity, is so often to be done when against the present inclination, and so often fills the mind with anxiety, that an habitual dislike steals upon us, and we shrink involuntarily from the remembrance of our task. This is the reason why almost every one wishes to quit his employment; he does not like another state, but is disgusted with his own.

From this unwillingness to perform more than is required of that which is

commonly performed with reluctance, it proceeds that few authors write their own lives. Statesmen, courtiers, ladies, generals, and seamen, have given to the world their own stories, and the events with which their different stations have made them acquainted. They retired to the closet as to a place of quiet and amusement, and pleased themselves with writing, because they could lay down the pen whenever they were weary. But the author, however conspicuous, or however important, either in the publick eye or in his own, leaves his life to be related.

related by his successors, for he cannot gratify his vanity but by sacrificing his ease.

It is commonly supposed that the uniformity of a studious life affords no matter of narration: but the truth is, that of the most studious life a great part passes without study. An author partakes of the common condition of humanity; he is born and married like another man; he has hopes and fears, expectations and disappointments, griefs and joys, and friends and enemies, like a courtier or a statesman; nor can I conceive why his affairs should not excite curiosity as much as the whisper of a drawing-room, or the factions of a camp.

Nothing detains the reader's attention more powerfully than deep involutions of distress, or sudden vicissitudes of fortune; and these might be abundantly afforded by memoirs of the sons of literature. They are intangled by contracts which they know not how to fulfil, and obliged to write on subjects which they do not understand. Every publication is a new period of time from which some encrease or declension of fame is to be reckoned. The gradations of a hero's life are from battle to battle, and of an author's from book to book.

Success and miscarriage have the same effects in all conditions. The prosperous are feared, hated, and flattered; and the unfortunate avoided, pitied, and despised. No sooner is a book published than the writer may judge of the opinion of the world. If his acquaintance press round him in publick places, or salute him from the other side of the street; if invitations to dinner come thick upon him, and those with whom he dines keep him to supper; if the ladies turn to him when his coat is plain, and the

footmen serve him with attention and alacrity; he may be sure that his work has been praised by some leader of literary fashions.

Of declining reputation the symptoms are not less easily observed. If the author enters a coffee-house, he has a box to himself; if he calls at a bookseller's, the boy turns his back; and what is the most fatal of all prognosticks, authors will visit him in a morning, and talk to him hour after hour of the malevolence of critics, the neglect of merit, the bad taste of the age, and the candour of posterity.

All this modified and varied by accident and custom would form very amusing scenes of biography, and might recreate many a mind which is very little delighted with conspiracies or battles, intrigues of a court, or debates of a parliament: to this might be added all the changes of the countenance of a patron, traced from the first glow which flattery raises in his cheek, through ardour of fondness, vehemence of promise, magnificence of praise, excuse of delay, and lamentation of inability, to the last chill look of final dismissal, when the one grows weary of soliciting, and the other of hearing solicitation.

Thus copious are the materials which have been hitherto suffered to lie neglected, while the repositories of every family that has produced a soldier or a minister are ransacked, and libraries are crowded with useless folios of state papers which will never be read, and which contribute nothing to valuable knowledge.

I hope the learned will be taught to know their own strength and their value, and instead of devoting their lives to the honour of those who seldom thank them for their labours, resolve at last to do justice to themselves.

Nº CIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 5.

RESPIERE AD LONGÆ JUSSIT SPATIA ULTIMA VITA.

Juv.

MUCH of the pain and pleasure of mankind arises from the conjectures which every one makes of the thoughts of others; we all enjoy praise which we do not hear, and resent contempt which we do not see. The Idler

may therefore be forgiven, if he suffers his imagination to represent to him what his readers will say or think when they are informed that they have now his last paper in their hands.

Value is more frequently raised by scarcity

scarcity than by use. That which lay neglected when it was common, rises in estimation as its quantity becomes less. We seldom learn the true want of what we have till it is discovered that we can have no more.

This essay, will, perhaps, be read with care even by those who have not yet attended to any other; and he that finds this late attention recompensed, will not forbear to wish that he had bestowed it sooner.

Though the Idler and his readers have contracted no close friendship, they are perhaps both unwilling to part. There are few things not purely evil, of which we can say, without some emotion of uneasiness, *This is the last*. Those who never could agree together, shed tears when mutual discontent has determined them to final separation; of a place which has been frequently visited, tho' without pleasure, the last look is taken with heaviness of heart; and the Idler, with all his chillness of tranquillity, is not wholly unaffected by the thought that his last essay is now before him.

This secret horror of the last is inseparable from a thinking being, whose life is limited, and to whom death is dreadful. We always make a secret comparison between a part and the whole; the termination of any period of life reminds us that life itself has likewise its termination; when we have done any thing for the last time, we involuntarily reflect that a part of the days allotted us is past, and that as more is past there is less remaining.

It is very happily and kindly provided, that in every life there are certain pauses and interruptions, which force consideration upon the careless, and seriousness upon the light; points of time where one course of action ends and another begins: and by vicissitude of fortune, or alteration of employment, by change of place, or loss of friendship,

we are forced to say of something, *This is the last*.

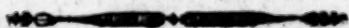
An even and unvaried tenour of life always hides from our apprehension the approach of its end. Succession is not perceived but by variation; he that lives to-day as he lived yesterday, and expects that as the present day is, such will be the morrow, easily conceives time as running in a circle, and returning to itself. The uncertainty of our duration is impressed commonly by dissimilitude of condition; it is only by finding life changeable that we are reminded of its shortness.

This conviction, however forcible at every new impression, is every moment fading from the mind; and partly by the inevitable incursion of new images, and partly by voluntary exclusion of unwelcome thoughts, we are again exposed to the universal fallacy; and we must do another thing for the last time, before we consider that the time is nigh when we shall do no more.

As the last Idler is published in that solemn week which the Christian world has always set apart for the examination of the conscience, the review of life, the extinction of earthly desires, and the renovation of holy purposes, I hope that my readers are already disposed to view every incident with seriousness, and improve it by meditation; and that when they see this series of trifles brought to a conclusion, they will consider that, by outliving the Idler, they have passed weeks, months, and years, which are now no longer in their power; that an end must in time be put to every thing great as to every thing little; that to life must come its last hour, and to this system of being it's last day, the hour at which probation ceases, and repentance will be vain; the day in which every work of the hand, and imagination of the heart, shall be brought to judgment, and an everlasting futurity shall be determined by the past.

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HARRISON's COLLECTION.



THE
L E T T E R S
O F

Sir Thomas Fitzosborne,

ON
SEVERAL SUBJECTS,

AGREMENTIS PIGNUS AMICITIAE,

MART.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WALKER, No 16, Rosomans Street.

M D C C X C V .

HARRISON'S COLLECTION

LETTERS

OF THOMAS HARRISON

REVEALING THE

TRUTH OF THE



LONDON:
Printed by J. HARRISON, at the 'Three Kings' Press, No. 1, St. Paul's Church-yard.

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L E T T E R S

ON

SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

LETTER I.

TO CLYTANDER.

SEPTEMBER 1739.

I Entirely approve of your design : but whilst I rejoice in the hope of seeing Enthusiasm thus successfully attacked in her strongest and most formidable holds, I would claim your mercy for her in another quarter ; and after having expelled her from her religious dominions, let me intreat you to leave her in the undisturbed enjoyment of her civil possessions. To own the truth, I look upon enthusiasm, in all other points but that of religion, to be a very necessary turn of mind ; as indeed it is a vein which nature seems to have marked with more or less strength in the tempers of most men. No matter what the object is, whether business, pleasures, or the fine arts ; whoever pursues them to any purpose must do so *con amore* : and inamoratos, you know, of every kind, are all enthusiasts. There is indeed a certain heightening faculty which universally prevails through our species, and we are all of us, perhaps, in our several favourite pursuits, pretty much in the circumstances of the renowned knight of La Mancha, when he attacked the barber's brazen bason for Mambrino's golden helmet.

What is Tully's *aliquid immensum infinitumque*, which he professes to aspire after in oratory, but a piece of true rhetorical Quixotism ? Yet never, I will

venture to affirm, would he have glowed with so much eloquence, had he been warmed with less enthusiasm. I am persuaded indeed, that nothing great or glorious was ever performed, where this quality had not a principal concern ; and as our passions add vigour to our actions, enthusiasm gives spirit to our passions. I might add too, that it ever opens and enlarges our capacities. Accordingly I have been informed, that one of the great lights of the present age never sits down to study till he has raised his imagination by the power of music. For this purpose he has a band of instruments placed near his library, which play till he finds himself elevated to a proper height ; upon which he gives a signal, and they instantly cease.

But those *high conceits*, which are suggested by enthusiasm, contribute not only to the pleasure and perfection of the fine arts, but to most other effects of our action and industry. To strike this spirit therefore out of the human constitution, to reduce things to their precise philosophical standard, would be to check some of the main wheels of society, and to fix half the world in an useless apathy. For if enthusiasm did not add an imaginary value to most of the objects of our pursuit ; if fancy did not give

give them their brightest colours, they would generally, perhaps, wear an appearance too contemptible to excite desire.

Weary'd we should lie down in death,
This cheat of life would take no more;
If you thought fame but empty breath,
I Phillis but a perjur'd whore.

PRJOR.

In a word, this enthusiasm for which I am pleading, is a beneficent enchan-

tress, who never exerts her magic but to our advantage, and only deals about her friendly spells in order to raise imaginary beauties, or to improve real ones. The worst that can be said of her is, that she is a kind deceiver and an obliging flatterer. Let me conjure you, then, good Clytander, not to break up her useful enchantments, which thus surround us on every side; but spare her harmless deceptions in mere charity to mankind. I am, &c.

LETTER II.

TO PHILOTES.

I Should not have suffered so long an interval to interrupt our correspondence, if my expedition to Euphronius had not wholly employed me for these last six weeks. I had long promised to spend some time with him before he embarked with his regiment for Flanders; and as he is not one of those Hudibrastic heroes who chuse to run away one day, that they may live to fight another; I was unwilling to trust the opportunity of seeing him to the very precarious contingency of his return. The high enjoyments he leaves behind him, might, indeed, be a pledge to his friends that his caution would at least be equal to his courage, if his notions of honour were less exquisitely delicate. But he will undoubtedly act as if he had nothing to hazard; though at the same time, from the generous sensibility of his temper, he feels every thing that his family can suffer in their fears for his danger. I had an instance, whilst I was in his house, how much Euphronia's apprehensions for his safety are ready to take alarm upon every occasion. She called me one day into the gallery to look upon a picture which was just come out of the painter's hands; but the moment she carried me up to it, she burst out into a flood of tears. It was drawn at the request, and after a design of her father's, and is a performance which does great honour to the ingenious artist who executed it. Euphronius is represented under the character of Hector when he parts from Andromache, who is personated in the piece by Euphronia; as her sister, who holds their little boy in her arms, is shadowed out under the figure

of the beautiful nurse with the young Astyanax.

I was so much pleased with the design in this uncommon family-piece, that I thought it deserved particular mention; as I could wish it were to become a general fashion to have all pictures of the same kind executed in some such manner. If, instead of furnishing a room with separate portraits, a whole family were to be thus introduced into a single piece, and represented under some interesting historical subject, suitable to their rank and character; portraits, which are now so generally and so deservedly despised, might become of real value to the public. By this means history-painting would be encouraged among us, and a ridiculous vanity turned to the improvement of one of the most instructive, as well as the most pleasing, of the imitative arts. Those who never contributed a single benefit to their own age, nor will ever be mentioned in any after-one, might by this means employ their pride and their expence in a way, which might render them entertaining and useful both to the present and future times. It would require, indeed, great judgment and address in the painter, to chuse and recommend subjects proper to the various characters which would present themselves to his pencil; and undoubtedly we should see many enormous absurdities committed, if this fashion were universally to be followed. It would certainly, however, afford a glorious scope to genius; and probably supply us in due time, with some productions which might be mentioned with those of the most celebrated schools. I am persuaded



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ed at least, that great talents have been sometimes lost to this art, by being confined to the dull, though profitable, labour of senseless portraits; as I should not doubt, if the method I am speaking of were to take effect, to see that very promising genius, who, in consequence of your generous offices, is now forming his hand by the noblest models in Rome, prove a rival to those great masters whose works he is studying.

It cannot, I think, he denied, that the prevailing fondness of having our persons copied out for posterity, is, in the present application of it, a most absurd and useless vanity; as, in general, nothing affords a more ridiculous scene, than those grotesque figures, which usually line the mansions of a man who is fond of displaying his canvases and cetry:

Good Heaven! that sots and knaves should be so vain;

To with their vile resemblance may remain;
And stand recorded, at their own request,
To future times a libel or a jest. DRYDEN.

You must by no means, however, imagine that I absolutely condemn this lower application of one of the noblest arts. It has certainly a very just use, when em-

ployed in perpetuating the resemblances of that part of our species, who have distinguished themselves in their respective generations. To be desirous of an acquaintance with the persons of those who have recommended themselves by their writings or their actions to our esteem and applause, is a very natural and reasonable curiosity. For myself, at least, I have often found much satisfaction in contemplating a well-chosen collection of the portrait kind, and comparing the mind of a favourite character, as it was either expressed or concealed in its external lineaments. There is something likewise extremely animating in these lively representations of celebrated merits; and it was an observation of one of the Scipio's, that he could never view the figures of his ancestors without finding his bosom glow with the most ardent passion of imitating their deeds. However, as the days of exemplary virtue are now no more, and we are not, many of us, disposed to transmit the most inspiring models to future times; it would be but prudence, methinks, if we are resolved to make posterity acquainted with the persons of the present age, that it should be by viewing them in the actions of the past. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER III.

TO PALAMEDES.

JULY 4, 1739.

NOTwithstanding the fine things you alledge in favour of the Romans, I do not yet find myself disposed to become a convert to your opinion: on the contrary, I am still obstinate enough to maintain that the fame of your admired nation is more dazzling than solid, and owing rather to those false prejudices which we are early taught to conceive of them, than to their real and intrinsic merit. If conquest indeed be the genuine glory of a state, and extensive dominions the most infallible test of national virtue; it must be acknowledged that no people in all history have so just a demand of our admiration. But if we take an impartial view of this celebrated nation, perhaps much of our applause may abate. When we contemplate them, for instance, within their own walls, what do we see but the dangerous convulsions of an ill-regulated policy? as we can seldom, I

believe, consider them with respect to foreign kingdoms, without the utmost abhorrence and indignation.

But there is nothing which places these sons of Romulus lower in my estimation, than their unmanly conduct in the article of their triumphs. I must confess, at the same time, that they had the sanction of a god to justify them in this practice. Bacchus, or (as Sir Isaac Newton has proved) the Egyptian Sesostris, after his return from his Indian conquests, gave the first instance of this ungenerous ceremony. But though his divinity was confessed in many other parts of the world, his example does not seem to have been followed till we find it copied out in all its insolent pomp at Rome.

It is impossible to read the descriptions of these arrogant exhibitions of prosperity, and not be struck with indignation at this barbarous method of insulting

insulting the calamities of the unfortunate. One would be apt, at the first glance, to suspect that every sentiment of humanity must be extinguished in a people who could behold with pleasure the moving instances, which these solemnities afforded, of the caprice of fortune; and could see the highest potentates of the earth dragged from their thrones, to fill up the proud parade of these ungenerous triumphs. But the prevailing maxim which ran through the whole system of Roman politics was, to encourage a spirit of conquest; and these honours were evidently calculated to awaken that unjust principle of mistaken patriotism. Accordingly by the fundamental laws of Rome, no general was entitled to a triumph, unless he had added some new acquisition to her possessions. To suppress a civil insurrection, however dangerous; to recover any former member of her dominions, however important; gave no claim to this supreme mark of ambitious distinction. For it was their notion, it seems, (and Valerius Maximus is my authority for saying so) that there is as much difference between adding to the territories of a commonwealth, and restoring those it has lost, as between the actual conferring of a benefit and the mere repelling of an injury. It was but of a piece, indeed, that a ceremony conducted in defiance of humanity, should be founded in contempt of justice; and it was natural enough that they should gain by oppression, what they were to enjoy by insult.

If we consider Paulus Æmilius, after his conquest of Macedonia, making his public entry into Rome, attended by the unfortunate Perseus and his infant family; and at the same time reflect upon our Black Prince when he passed through London with his royal captive, after the glorious battle of Poitiers; we cannot fail of having the proper sentiments of a Roman triumph. What generous mind who saw the Roman consul in all the giddy exaltation of unfeeling pride, but would rather (as to that single circumstance) have been the degraded Perseus, than the triumphant Æmilius? There is something indeed in distress that reflects a sort of merit upon every object which is so situated, and turns off our attention from those blemishes that stain even the most vitious characters. Accordingly, in the instance of which I am speaking,

the perfidious monarch was overlooked in the suffering Perseus; and a spectacle so affecting checked the joy of conquest even in a Roman breast. For Plutarch assures us, when that worthless, but unhappy, prince was observed, together with his two sons and a daughter, marching amidst the train of prisoners, nature was too hard for custom, and many of the spectators melted into a flood of tears. But with what a generous tenderness did the British hero conduct himself upon an occasion of the same kind? He employed all the artful address of the most refined humanity, to conceal from his unhappy prisoner every thing that could remind him of his disgrace; and the whole pomp that was displayed upon this occasion, appeared singly as intended to lighten the weight of his misfortunes, and to do honour to the vanquished monarch.

You will remember, Palamedes, I am only considering the Romans in a political view, and speaking of them merely in their national character. As to individuals, you know, I pay the highest veneration to many that rose up against them. It would not indeed be just to involve particulars in general reflections of any kind: and I cannot but acknowledge ere I close my letter, that though, in the article I have been mentioning, the Romans certainly acted a most unworthy part towards their public enemies, yet they seem to have maintained the most exalted notions of conduct with respect to their private ones. That noble (and may I not add, that Christian) sentiment of Juvenal,

minuti
Semper et infirmi est animi exiguique voluntas,
Uli,

was not merely the refined precept of their more improved philosophers, but a general and popular maxim among them; and that generous sentiment so much and so deservedly admired in the Roman orator; *Non permit me mortales inimicitias, sempiternas amicitias habere*, was, as appears from Livy, so universally received as to become even a proverbial expression. Thus Sallust likewise, I remember, speaking of the virtues of the ancient Romans, mentions it as their principal characteristic, that upon all occasions they shewed a disposition rather to forgive than revenge an injury. But the false notions they had embraced concerning

FITZOSBORNE'S LETTERS.

concerning the glory of their country, taught them to subdue every affection of humanity, and extinguish every dictate of justice which opposed that destructive principle. It was this spirit,

however, in return and by a very just consequence, that proved at length the means of their total destruction. Farewel. I am, &c.

LETTER IV.

TO PHILOTEA.

JULY 4, 1743.

WHILST you are probably enjoying blue skies and cooling grots, I am shivering here in the midst of summer. The *molles sub arbore somni*, the *spelunca vivique lacus*, are pleasures which we in England can seldom taste but in description. For in a climate, where the warmest season is frequently little better than a milder sort of winter, the sun is much too welcome a guest to be avoided. If ever we have occasion to complain of him, it must be for his absence: at least I have seldom found his visits troublesome. You see I am still the same cold mortal as when you left me. But whatever warmth I may want in my constitution, I want none in my affections; and you have not a friend who is more ardently yours than I pretend to be. You have indeed such a right to my heart from mere gratitude, that I almost wish I owed you less upon that account, that I might give it you upon a more disinterested principle. However, if there is any part of it which you cannot demand in justice, be assured you have it by affection; so that, on one or other of these titles, you may always depend upon me as wholly yours. Can it be necessary after this to add, that I received your letter with singular satisfaction, as it brought me an account of your welfare, and of the agreeable manner in which you pass your time? If there be any room to wish you an increase of pleasure, it is, perhaps, that the three virgins you mention, were a few degrees handsomer and younger. But I would not desire their charms should be heightened, were I not sure they will never lessen your repose; for knowing your Stoicism, as I do, I dare trust your ease with any thing less than a goddess: and those females, I perceive, are so far removed from the order of di-

visities, that they seem to require a considerable advance before I could even allow them to be so much as women.

It was mentioned to me the other day, that there is some probability we may see you in England by the winter. When I considered only my private satisfaction, I heard this with a very sensible pleasure. But as I have long learned to submit my own interests to yours, I could not but regret there was a likelihood of your being so soon called off from one of the most advantageous opportunities of improvement that can attend a sensible mind. An ingenious Italian author of your acquaintance compares a judicious traveller to a river, which increases its stream the farther it flows from its source; or to certain springs, which, running through rich veins of mineral, improve their qualities as they pass along. It were pity then you should be checked in so useful a progress, and diverted from a course, from whence you may derive so many noble advantages. You have hitherto, I imagine, been able to do little more than lay in materials for your main design. But six months now, would give you a truer notion of what is worthy of observation in the countries through which you pass, than twice that time when you were less acquainted with the languages. The truth is, till a man is capable of conversing with ease among the natives of any country, he can never be able to form a just and adequate idea of their policy and manners. He who sits at a play without understanding the dialect, may indeed discover which of the actors are best dressed, and how well the scenes are painted or disposed; but the characters and conduct of the drama must for ever remain a secret to him. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER V.

TO CLYTANDER.

IF I had been a party in the conversation you mention, I should have joined, I believe, with your friend in supporting those sentiments you seem to condemn. I will venture indeed to acknowledge, that I have long been of opinion, the moderns pay too blind a deference to the antients; and though I have the highest veneration for several of their remains, yet I am inclined to think they have occasioned us the loss of some excellent originals. They are the proper and best guides, I allow, to those who have not the force to break out into new paths. But whilst it is thought sufficient praise to be their followers, genius is checked in her flights, and many a fair tract lies undiscovered in the boundless regions of imagination. Thus, had Virgil trusted more to his native strength, the Romans, perhaps, might have seen an original Epic in their language. But Homer was considered by that admired poet as the sacred object of his first and principal attention; and he seemed to think it the noblest triumph of genius, to be adorned with the spoils of that glorious chief.

You will tell me, perhaps, that even Homer himself was indebted to the antients; that the full streams he dispensed, did not flow from his own source, but were derived to him from an higher. This, I acknowledge, has been asserted; but asserted without proof, and, I may venture to add, without probability. He seems to have stood alone and unsupported; and to have stood, for that very reason, so much the nobler object of admiration. Scarce, indeed, I imagine, would his works have received that high regard

which was paid to them from their earliest appearance, had they been formed upon prior models, had they shone only with reflected light.

But will not this servile humour of subjecting the powers of invention to the guidance of the antients, account, in some degree at least, for our meeting with so small a number of authors who can claim the merit of being originals? Is not this a kind of submission, that damps the fire and weakens the vigour of the mind? For the antients seem to be considered by us as so many guards to prevent the free excursions of imagination, and set bounds to her flight. Whereas they ought rather to be looked upon (the few, I mean, who are themselves originals) as encouragements to a full and uncontrouled exertion of her faculties. But if here or there a poet has courage enough to trust to his own unassisted reach of thought, his example does not seem so much to incite others to make the same adventurous attempts, as to confirm them in the humble disposition of imitation. For if he succeeds, he immediately becomes himself the occasion of a thousand models: if he does not, he is pointed out as a discouraging instance of the folly of renouncing those established leaders which antiquity has authorized. Thus invention is depressed, and genius enslaved: the creative power of poetry is lost, and the ingenious, instead of exerting that productive faculty which alone can render them the just objects of admiration, are humbly contented with borrowing both the materials and the plans of their mimic structures. I am, &c.

LETTER VI.

TO ORONTES.

MARCH 10, 1779.

THERE is nothing, perhaps, wherein mankind are more frequently mistaken, than in the judgments which they pass on each other. The stronger lines, indeed, in every man's character, must always be marked too clearly and

distinctly to deceive even the most careless observer; and no one, I am persuaded, was ever esteemed in the general opinion of the world as highly deficient in his moral or intellectual qualities, who did not justly merit his reputation. But

I speak

I speak only of those more nice and delicate traits which distinguish the several degrees of probity and good sense, and ascertain the quantum (if I may so express it) of human merit. The powers of the soul are so often concealed by modesty, diffidence, timidity, and a thousand other accidental affections; and the nice complexion of her moral operations depends so entirely on those internal principles from whence they proceed; that those who form their notions of others by casual and distant views, must unavoidably be led into very erroneous judgments. Even Orontes, with all his candour and penetration, is not, I perceive, entirely secure from mistakes of this sort; and the sentiments you expressed in your last letter concerning Varus, are by no means agreeable to the truth of his character.

It must be acknowledged at the same time, that Varus is an exception to all general rules: neither his head nor his heart are exactly to be discovered by those indexes, which are usually supposed to point directly to the genius and temper of other men. Thus with a memory that will scarce serve him for the common purposes of life, with an imagination even more slow than his memory, and with an attention that could not carry him through the easiest proposition in Euclid; he has a sound and excellent understanding joined to a refined and exquisite taste. But the rectitude of his sentiments seems to arise less from reflection than sensation; rather from certain suitable feelings which the objects that present themselves to his consideration instantly occasion in his mind, than from the energy of any active faculties which he is capable of exerting for that pur-

pose. His conversation is unentertaining: for though he talks a great deal, all that he utters is delivered with labour and hesitation. Not that his ideas are really dark and confused; but because he is never contented to convey them in the first words that occur. Like the orator mentioned by Tully, *metuens ne vitiosum colligeret, etiam verum sanguinem deperdebat*, he expresses himself ill by always endeavouring to express himself better. His reading cannot so properly be said to have rendered him knowing, as not ignorant: it has rather enlarged, than filled his mind.

His temper is as singular as his genius, and both equally mistaken by those who only know him a little. If you were to judge of him by his general appearance, you would believe him incapable of all the more delicate sensations: nevertheless, under a rough and boisterous behaviour, he conceals a heart full of tenderness and humanity. He has a sensibility of nature, indeed, beyond what I ever observed in any other man; and I have often seen him affected by those little circumstances, which would make no impression on a mind of less exquisite feelings. This extreme sensibility in his temper influences his speculations as well as his actions, and he hovers between various hypotheses without settling upon any, by giving importance to these minute difficulties which would not be strong enough to suspend a more active and vigorous mind. In a word, Varus is in the number of those whom it is impossible not to admire or not to despise; and at the same time that he is the esteem of all his friends, he is the contempt of all his acquaintance. Adieu, I am, &c.

LETTER VII.

TO HORTENSIVS.

YOUR excellent brawn wanted no additional recommendation to make it more acceptable, but that of your company: However, though I cannot share it with my friend, I devote it to his memory, and make daily offerings of it to a certain divinity, whose temples, though now well nigh deserted, were once held in the highest veneration: she is mentioned by antient authors under the name

and title of *DIVA AMICITIA*. To her I bring the victim you have furnished me with, in all the pomp of Roman rites, Wreathed with the sacred *visita*, and crowned with a branch of rosemary, I place it on an altar of well-polished mahogany, where I pour libations over it of acid wine, and sprinkle it with flour of mustard. I deal out certain portions to those who assist at this social ceremony,

ny,

By, reminding them, with an *Hoc age*, of the important business upon which they are assembled; and conclude the festival with this votive couplet:

Close as this brawn the circling fillet binds,
May friendship's sacred bands unite our
minds!

Farewel. I am, &c.

LETTER VIII.

TO CLYTANDER.

JULY 2, 1736.

YOU must have been greatly distressed indeed, Clytander, when you thought of calling me in as your auxiliary, in the debate you mention. Or was it not rather a motive of generosity which suggested that design? and you were willing, perhaps, I should share the glory of a victory which you had already secured. Whatever your intention was, *mine* is always to comply with your requests; and I very readily enter the lists, when I am at once to combat in the cause of truth and on the side of my friend.

It is not necessary, I think, in order to establish the credibility of a particular Providence, to deduce it (as your objector, I find, seems to require) from known and undisputed facts. I should be exceedingly cautious in pointing out any supposed instances of that kind; as those who are fond of indulging themselves in determining the precise cases wherein they imagine the immediate interposition of the Divinity is discoverable, often run into the weakest and most injurious superstitions. It is impossible indeed, unless we were capable of looking through the whole chain of things, and of viewing each effect in it's remote connections and final issues, to pronounce of any contingency, that it is absolutely and in it's ultimate tendencies either good or bad. That can only be known by the great Author of nature, who comprehends the full extent of our total existence, and sees the influence which every particular circumstance will have in the general sum of our happiness. But though the peculiar points of divine interposition are thus necessarily, and from the natural imperfection of our discerning faculties, extremely dubious; yet it can by no means from thence be justly inferred, that the doctrine of a particular Providence is either groundless or absurd: the general principle may be true, though the application of it to any

given purpose be involved in very inextricable difficulties.

The notion, that the material world is governed by general mechanical laws, has induced your friend to argue, That it is probable the Deity should act by the same rule of conduct in the intellectual; and leave moral agents entirely to those consequences which necessarily result from the particular exercise of their original powers. But this hypothesis takes a question for granted, which requires much proof before it can be admitted. The grand principle which preserves this system of the universe in all it's harmonious order, is gravity, or that property by which all the particles of matter mutually tend to each other. Now this is a power which, it is acknowledged, does not essentially reside in matter, but must be ultimately derived from the action of some immaterial cause. Why therefore may it not reasonably be supposed to be the effect of the divine agency, immediately and constantly operating for the preservation of this wonderful machine of nature? Certain, at least, it is, that the explication which Sir Isaac Newton has endeavoured to give of this wonderful phenomenon, by means of his subtil ether, has not afforded universal satisfaction: and it is the opinion of a very great writer, who seems to have gone far into enquiries of this abstruse kind, that the numberless effects of this power are inexplicable upon mechanical principles, or in any other way than by having recourse to a spiritual agent, who connects, moves, and disposes all things according to such methods as best comport with his incomprehensible purposes.

But successful villainy and oppressed virtue are deemed, I perceive, in the account of your friend, as powerful instances to prove, that the Supreme Being remains an uninterposing spectator of what is transacted upon this theatre of the world. However, ere this argument

ment can have a determining weight, it must be proved (which yet, surely, never can be proved) that prosperous iniquity has all those advantages in reality, which it may seem to have in appearance; and that those accidents which are usually esteemed as calamities, do in truth, and in the just scale of things, deserve to be distinguished by that appellation. It is a noble saying of the philosopher cited by Seneca, that there cannot be a more unhappy man in the world, than he who has never experienced adversity. There is nothing, perhaps, in which mankind are more apt to make false calculations, than in the article both of their own happiness and that of others; as there are few, I believe, who have lived any time in the world, but have found frequent occasions to say with the poor hunted stag in the fable; who was entangled by those horns he had but just before been admiring;

*O me infelicem! qui nunc demum intelligo,
Ut illa mihi profuerint quæ despexeram,
Et quæ laudaram quantum luctus habuerim!*

РНАДР.

If we look back upon the sentiments of past ages, we shall find the opinion for which I am contending has prevailed from the remotest account of time. It must undoubtedly have entered the world as early as Religion herself; since all institutions of that kind must necessarily be founded upon the supposition of a particular Providence. It appears indeed to have been the favourite doctrine of some of the most distinguished names in antiquity. Xenophon tells us when Cyrus led out his army against the Assyrians, the word which he gave to his soldiers was, ΕΙΣΤΕ ΕΥΧΑΙΡΟΕ ΚΑΙ ΝΕΜΕΝ, 'Jupiter the defender and conductor'; and he represents that prince as attributing success, even in the sports of the field, to divine Providence. Thus, likewise, Timoleon (as the author of his life assures us) believed every action of mankind to be under the immediate influence of the gods; and Livy

remarks of the first Scipio Africanus, that he never undertook any important affair, either of private or public concern, without going to the Capitol in order to implore the assistance of Jupiter. Balbus the Stoic, in the dialogue on the nature of the gods, expressly declares for a particular providence : and Cicero himself, in one of his orations, imputes that superior glory which attended the Roman nation, singly to this animating persuasion. But none of the ancients seem to have had a stronger impression of this truth upon their minds, than the immortal Homer. Every page in the works of that divine poet will furnish proofs of this observation. I cannot however forbear mentioning one or two remarkable instances, which just now occur to me. When the Grecian chiefs cast lots which of them should accept the challenge of Hector, the poet describes the army as lifting up their eyes and hands to heaven, and imploring the gods that they would direct the lot to fall on one of their most distinguished heroes :

Αισι—Πιστι δι χηρας ανισκας,
 Ωδε τις απισκας, ιδ ων εις κρησον πυρην·
 Ζω πολιν, η Αισθη λαχιν, η Τυδος υον,
 Η αυτον Βασίλιν πολιν ρυσας Μυσην*.

So likewise Antenor proposes to the Trojans the restitution of Helen, as having no hopes, he tells them, that any thing would succeed with them after they had broken the faith of treaties:

ΗΥΘΥΝΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΕ
 ΨΥΧΟΜΕΝΟΙ ΜΑΧΟΜΕΘΑ· ΠΩ Ν ΕΥ ΤΙ ΚΑΤΕΛΘ
 ΗΜΙΝ
 ΕΛΘΟΜΕΙ ΕΚΙΛΕΘΕΘΑΙ†.

And indeed Homer hardly ever makes his heroes succeed (as his excellent translator justly observes) unless they have first offered a prayer to Heaven. 'He is perpetually,' says Mr. Pope, 'acknowledging the hand of God in all events, and ascribing to that alone all the victories, triumphs, rewards, or

- * The people pray with lifted eyes and hands,
 And vowe like those ascend from all the bands—
 ' Grant, thou Almighty, in whose hand is fate,
 ' A worthy champion for the Grecian state :
 ' This task let Ajax or Tydides prove,
 ' Or he, the king of kings, belov'd of Jove.'
- POPE.

† The ties of faith, the sworn alliance broke,
Our impious battles the just gods provoke. POPE.

• pramāṇa-

'punishments of men. The grand moral laid down at the entrance of his poem, "*Angels' spirits lead, The will of God was fulfilled,*" runs through his whole work, and is, with a most remarkable care and conduct, put into the mouths of his greatest and wisest persons on every occasion.'

Upon the whole, Clytander, we may safely assert, that the belief of a particular Providence is founded upon such probable reasons as may well justify our assent. It would scarce, therefore, be wise to renounce an opinion, which affords so firm a support to the soul in those seasons wherein she stands most in need of assistance, merely because it is not possible, in questions of this kind, to solve every difficulty which attends them. If it be highly consonant to our general notions of the benevolence of the Deity (as highly consonant it surely is) that he should not leave so impotent a creature as man, to the single guidance

of his own precarious faculties; who would abandon a belief so full of the most enlivening consolation, in compliance with those metaphysical reasonings which are usually calculated rather to silence, than to satisfy, an humble enquirer after truth? Who indeed would wish to be convinced, that he stands unguarded by that heavenly shield, which can protect him against all the assaults of an injurious and malevolent world? The truth is, the belief of a particular providence is the most animating persuasion that the mind of man can embrace: it gives strength to our hopes, and firmness to our resolutions; it subdues the insolence of prosperity, and draws out the sting of affliction. In a word, it is like the golden branch to which Virgil's hero was directed, and affords the only secure passport through the regions of darkness and sorrow.

I am, &c.

LETTER IX.

TO TIMOCLEA.

JULY 29, 1748.

IT is with wonderful satisfaction I find you are grown such an adept in the occult arts, and that you take a laudable pleasure in the ancient and ingenious study of making and solving riddles. It is a science, undoubtedly, of most necessary acquirement, and deserves to make a part in the education of both sexes. Those of yours may by this means very innocently indulge their usual curiosity of discovering and disclosing a secret; whilst such amongst ours who have a turn for deep speculations, and are fond of puzzling themselves and others, may exercise their faculties this way with much private satisfaction, and without the least disturbance to the public. It is an art, indeed, which I would recommend to the encouragement of both the universities, as it affords the easiest and shortest method of conveying some of the most useful principles of logic, and might therefore be introduced as a very proper substitute in the room of those dry systems, which are at present in vogue in those places of education. For, as it consists in discovering truth under borrowed appearances, it might prove of wonderful ad-

vantage in every branch of learning, by habituating the mind to separate all foreign ideas, and consequently preserving it from that grand source of error, the being deceived by false connections. In short, Timoclea, this your favourite science contains the sum of all human policy; and as there is no passing thro' the world without sometimes mixing with fools and knaves, who would not chuse to be master of the enigmatical art, in order, on proper occasions, to be able to lead aside craft and impertinence from their aim, by the convenient artifice of a prudent disguise? It was the maxim of a very wise prince, That he who knows not how to dissemble, knows not how to reign: and I desire you would receive it as mine, That he who knows not now to riddle, knows not how to live.

But besides the general usefulness of this art, it will have a farther recommendation to all true admirers of antiquity, as being practised by the most considerable personages of early times. It is almost three thousand years ago since Samson proposed his famous riddle so well known; though the advo-

cates

dates for ancient learning must forgive me, if in this article I attribute the superiority to the moderns: for if we may judge of the skill of the former in this profound art by that remarkable specimen of it, the geniuses of those early ages were by no means equal to those which our times have produced. But, as a friend of mine has lately finished, and intends very shortly to publish, a most curious work in folio, wherein he has fully proved that important point, I will not anticipate the pleasure you will receive by perusing his ingenious performance. In the mean while let it be remembered to the immortal glory of this art, that the wisest man, as well as the greatest prince that ever lived, is said to have amused himself and a neighbouring monarch in trying the strength of each other's talents in this way; several riddles, it seems, having passed between Solomon and Hiram, upon condition that he who failed in the solution should incur a certain penalty. It is recorded likewise of the great father of poetry, even the divine Homer himself, that he had a taste of this sort; and we are told by a Greek writer of his life, that he died with vexation for not being able to discover a riddle, which was proposed to him by some fishermen at a certain island called Iö.

I am inclined to think, indeed, that the antients in general were such admirers of this art, as to inscribe riddles upon their tomb-stones, and that, not satisfied with puzzling the world in their life-time, they bequeathed enigmatical legacies to the public after their decease. My conjecture is founded upon an an-

tient inscription, which I will venture to quote to you, though it is in Latin, as your friend and neighbour the antiquarian will, I am persuaded, be very glad of obliging you with a dissertation upon it. Be pleased then to ask him, whether he does not think that the following inscription favours my sentiments—

VIATORES. OPTIMI.
HIS. NVGIS GRYPHIS. AMBAGIBVSQVE.
MEIS. CONDONARE. ROSCIMVS.

However this may be, it is certain that it was one of the great entertainments of the pastoral life, and therefore, if for no other reason, highly deserving the attention of our modern Arcadians. You remember, I dare say, the riddle which the shepherd Dametas proposes to Mænalca in Dryden's *Virgil*—

Say where the round of heav'n, which all
contains,
To three short ells on earth our fight re-
strains:
Tell That, and rise a Phœbus for thy pains.

This ænigma, which has exercised the guesses of many a learned critic, remains yet unexplained: which I mention, not only as an instance of the wonderful penetration which is necessary to render a man a compleat adept in this most noble science, but as an incitement to you to employ your skill in attempting the solution. And now, Timoclea, what will your grave friend say, who reproached you, it seems, for your riddling genius, when he shall find you are thus able to defend your favourite study by the lofty examples of kings, commentators, and poets? I am, &c.

LETTER X.

TO PHIDIPPUS.

HARDLY, I imagine, were you in earnest, when you required my thoughts upon Friendship: for, to give you the truest idea of that generous intercourse, may I not justly refer you back to the sentiments of your own heart? I am sure, at least, I have learned to improve my own notions of that refined affection, by those instances which I have observed in yourself; as it is from thence I have received the clearest conviction, that it derives all its strength and stability from virtue and good-sense.

There is not, perhaps, a quality more uncommon in the world, than that which is necessary to form a man for this refined commerce: for however sociableness may be esteemed a just characteristic of our species; *friendliness*, I am persuaded, will scarce be found to enter into its general definition. The qualifications requisite to support and conduct friendship in all its strength and extent, do not seem to be sufficiently diffused among the human race, to render them the distinguishing marks of mankind; unless

C

generosity

generosity and good-sense should be allowed (what they never can be allowed) universally to prevail. On the contrary, how few are in possession of those most amiable of endowments? how few are capable of that noble elevation of mind, which raises a man above those little jealousies and rivalships that shoot up in the paths of common amities?

We should not, indeed, so often hear complaints of the inconstancy and falterings of friends, if the world in general were more cautious than they usually are, in forming connections of this kind. But the misfortune is, our friendships are apt to be too *forward*, and thus either fall off in the blossom, or never arrive at just maturity. It is an excellent piece of advice, therefore, that the poet Martial gives upon this occasion.

*Tu tantum inspicere qui novus paratur,
An possit fieri vetus sodalis.*

Were I to make trial of any person's qualifications for an union of so much delicacy, there is no part of his conduct I would sooner single out, than to observe him in his resentments. And this, not upon the maxim frequently advanced, That the best friends make the bitterest enemies; but on the contrary, because I am persuaded, that he who is capable of being a bitter enemy, can never possess the necessary virtues that constitute a true friend. For must he not want generosity (that most essential principle of an amicable combination) who can be so mean as to indulge a spirit of *settled* revenge, and coolly triumph in the oppression of an adversary? Accordingly there is no circumstance in the character of the excellent Agricola, that gives me a higher notion of the true heroism of his mind, than what the historian of his life mentions concerning his conduct in this particular instance. *Ex iracundia*, says Tacitus, *nihil supererat: secretum et silentium ejus non timebat*. His elevated spirit was too great to suffer his resentment to survive the occasion of it; and those who provoked his indignation, had nothing to apprehend from the *secret* and silent

workings of unextinguished malice. But the practice, it must be owned, (perhaps I might have said, the principle too) of the world runs strongly on the side of the contrary disposition; and thus, in opposition to that generous sentiment of your admired orator, which I have so often heard you quote with applause, our friendships are mortal, whilst it is our enmities only that never die.

But though judgment must collect the materials of this goodly structure, it is affection that gives the cement; and passion as well as reason should concur in forming a firm and lasting coalition. Hence, perhaps, it is, that not only the most powerful but the most lasting friendships are usually the produce of the early season of our lives, when we are most susceptible of the warm and affectionate impressions. The connections into which we enter in any after-period, decrease in strength as our passions abate in heat; and there is not, I believe, a single instance of a vigorous friendship that ever struck root in a bosom chilled by years. How irretrievable then is the loss of those best and fairest acquisitions of our youth? Seneca, taking notice of Augustus Cæsar's lamenting, upon a certain occasion, the death of Mæcenas and Agrippa, observes, that he, who could instantly repair the destruction of whole fleets and armies, and bid Rome, after a general conflagration, rise out of her ashes even with more lustre than before; was yet unable, during a whole life, to fill up those lasting vacancies in his friendship: a reflection, which reminds me of renewing my solicitations, that you would be more cautious in hazarding a life which I have so many reasons to love and honour. For whenever an accident of the same kind shall separate (and what other accident can separate) the happy union which has so long subsisted between us, where shall I retrieve so severe a loss? I am utterly indisposed to enter into new habitudes, and extend the little circle of my friendships: happy if I may but preserve it firm and unbroken to the closing moment of my life! Adieu. I am &c.

L E T.

LETTER XI.

TO HORTENSIVS.

AUGUST 12, 1742.

IF any thing could tempt me to read the Latin poem you mention, it would be your recommendation. But shall I venture to own, that I have no taste for modern compositions of that kind? There is one prejudice which always remains with me against them, and which I have never yet found cause to renounce: no true genius I am persuaded would submit to write any considerable poem in a dead language. A poet who glows with the genuine fire of a warm and lively imagination, will find the copiousness of his own native English scarce sufficient to convey his ideas in all their strength and energy. The most comprehensive language sinks under the weight of great conceptions; and a pregnant imagination disdains to stint the natural growth of her thoughts to the confined standard of classical expression. An ordinary genius, indeed, may be humbly contented to pursue words through indexes and dictionaries, and tamely borrow phrases from Horace and Virgil; but could the elevated invention of Milton, or the brilliant sense of Pope, have ingloriously submitted to lower the force and majesty of the most exalted and nervous sentiments, to the scanty measure of the Roman dialect? For copiousness is by no means in the number of those advantages which attend the Latin language, as many of the antients have both confessed and lamented. Thus Lucretius and Seneca complain of it's deficiency with respect to subjects of philosophy; as Pliny the younger owns he found it incapable of furnishing him with proper terms, in compositions of wit and humour. But if the Romans themselves found their language thus penurious, in it's entire and most ample supplies; how much more contracted must it be to us, who are only in possession of it's broken and scattered remains?

To say truth, I have observed in most of the modern Latin poems which I have accidentally run over, a remarkable barrenness of sentiment, and have generally found the poet degraded into the parodist. It is usually the little dealers

on Parnassus, who have not a sufficient stock of genius to launch out into a more enlarged commerce with the Muses, that hawk about these classical gleanings. The style of these performances always puts me in mind of Harlequin's snuff, which he collected by borrowing a pinch out of every man's box he could meet, and then retailed it to his customers under the pompous title of *tahac de mille fleurs*. Half a line from Virgil or Lucretius, pieced out with a bit from Horace or Juvenal, is generally the motley mixture which enters into compositions of this sort. One may apply to these jackdaw-poets with their stolen feathers, what Martial says to a contemporary plagiarist—

Stat contra dicique tibi tua pagina; Furis.

This kind of theft, indeed, every man must necessarily commit, who sets up for a poet in a dead language. For, to express himself with propriety, he must not only be sure that every single word which he uses, is authorized by the best writers; but he must not even venture to throw them out of that particular combination in which he finds them connected: otherwise he may run into the most barbarous solecisms. To explain my meaning by an instance from modern language: the French words *arene* and *rive*, are both to be met with in their approved authors; and yet if a foreigner, unacquainted with the niceties of that language, should take the liberty of bringing those two words together as in the following verse,

Sur la rive du fleuve amassant de l'arene;

he would be exposed to the ridicule, not only of the critics, but of the most ordinary mechanic in Paris. For the idiom of the French tongue will not admit of the expression *sur la rive du fleuve*, but requires the phrase *sur le bord de la riviere*; as they never say, *amasser de l'arene*, but *du sable*. The same observation may be extended to all languages whether living or dead. But as no reasonings from analogy can be of the least force in determining the idiomatic proprieties of any language whatsoever;

a modern Latin poet has no other method of being sure of avoiding absurdities of this kind, than to take whole phrases as he finds them formed to his hands. Thus, instead of accommodating his expression to his sentiment, (if any he should have) he must necessarily bend his sentiment to his expression, as he is not at liberty to strike out into that boldness of style, and those unexpected combinations of words, which give such grace and energy to the thoughts of every true genius. True genius, indeed, is as much discovered by style, as by any other distinction; and every eminent writer, without indulging any unwarranted licences, has a language which he derives from himself, and which is peculiarly and literally his own,

I would recommend therefore to these empty echoes of the ancients, which owe their voice to the ruins of Rome, the advice of an old philosopher to an affected orator of his times: *Vive moribus præteritis*, said he, *loquere verbis præsentibus*. Let these poets form their conduct if they please, by the manners of the antients; but if they would prove their genius, it must be by the language of the moderns. I would not however, have you imagine, that I exclude all merit from a qualification of this kind. To be skilled in the mechanism of Latin verse, is a talent, I confess, extremely worthy of a pedagogue; as it is an exercise of singular advantage to his pupils. Adieu, I am, &c.

LETTER XII.

TO AMASIA,

JULY 3, 1744.

IF good manners will not justify my long silence, policy at least will: and you must confess there is some prudence in not owning a debt one is incapable of paying. I have the mortification, indeed, to find myself engaged in a commerce which I have not a sufficient fund to support; though I must add, at the same time, if you expect an equal return of entertainment for that which your letters afford, I know not where you will find a correspondent. You will scarcely at least look for him in the desert, or hope for any thing very lively from a man who is obliged to seek his companions among the dead. You who dwell in a land flowing with mirth and good humour, meet with many a gallant occurrence worthy of record; but what can a village produce, which is more famous for repose than for action, and is so much behind the manners of the present age, as scarce to have got out of the simplicity of the first? The utmost of our humour rises no higher than punch; and all that we know of Assemblies, is once a year round our May-pole. Thus unqualified, as I am, to contribute to your amusement, I am as much at a loss to supply my own; and am obliged to have recourse to a thousand stratagems to help me off with those lingering hours, which run so swiftly, it seems, by you. As one cannot

always, you know, be playing at push-pin, I sometimes employ myself with a less philosophical diversion; and either pursue butterflies, or hunt rhymes, as the weather and the seasons permit. This morning not proving very favourable to my sports of the field, I contented myself with those under covert; and as I am not at present supplied with any thing better for your entertainment, will you suffer me to set before you some of my game?

A TALE.

ERE Saturn's sons were yet disgrac'd,
And heathen gods were all the taste,
Full oft (we read) 'twas Jove's high will
To take the air on Ida's hill,
It chanc'd, as once with serious ken,
He view'd from thence the ways of men,
He saw (and pity touch'd his breast)
The world by three foul fiends possess.
Pale Discord there, and Folly vain,
With haggard Vice, upheld their reign,
Then forth he sent his summons high,
And call'd a senate of the sky.
Round as the winged orders prest,
Jove thus his sacred mind express'd—
' Say, which of all this shining train
' Will Virtue's conflict hard sustain?
' For see! she drooping takes her flight,
' While not a god supports her right.'
He paus'd—when from amidst the sky,
Wit, Innocence, and Harmony,

WES

With one united zeal arose,
The triple tyrants to oppose,
That instant from the realms of day,
With gen'rous speed, they took their way ;
To Britain's isle direct their car,
And enter'd with the ev'ning star.

Beside the road a mansion stood,
Defended by a circling wood.
Hither, disguis'd, their steps they bend,
In hopes, perchance, to find a friend.
Nor vain their hope : for records say
Worth ne'er from thence was turn'd away.
They urge the trav'ler's common chance,
And ev'ry piteous plea advance.
The artful tale that Wit had feign'd,
Admittance easy soon obtain'd.

The dame who own'd, adorned the place;
Three blooming daughters added grace.
The first, with gentlest manners blest,
And temper sweet, each heart possess'd ;
Who view'd her, catch'd the tender flame,
And soft Amasia was her name.
In sprightly sense and polish'd air,
What maid with Mira might compare ?
While Lucia's eyes, and Lucia's lyre,
Did unresisted love inspire.

Imagine now the table clear,
And mirth in ev'ry face appear :
The song, the tale, the jest, went round,
The riddle dark, the trick profound.
Thus each admiring and admir'd,
The hosts and guests at length retir'd ;
When Wit thus spake her sister-train—
Faith, friends our errand is but vain.

Quick let us measure back the sky ;
These nymphs alone may well supply
Wit, Innocence, and Harmony.

You see to what expedient solitude has reduced me, when I am thus forced to string rhymes, as boys do birds eggs, in order to while away my idle hours. But a gayer scene is, I trust, approaching ; and the day will shortly, I hope, arrive, when I shall only complain that it steals away too fast. It is not from any improvement in the objects which surround me, that I expect this wondrous change ; nor yet that a longer familiarity will render them more agreeable. It is from a promise I received, that Amasia will visit the hermit in his cell, and disperse the gloom of a solitaire by the cheerfulness of her conversation. What inducement shall I mention to prevail with you to hasten that day ? Shall I tell you, that I have a bower over-arched with jessamine ? that I have an oak which is the favourite haunt of a dryad ? that I have a plantation, which flourishes with all the verdure of May, in the midst of all the cold of December ? Or, may I not hope that I have something still more prevailing with you than all these, as I can with truth assure you, that I have a heart which is faithfully yours, &c.

LETTER XIII.

TO PHILOTES.

AMONG all the advantages which attend friendship, there is not one more valuable than the liberty it admits in laying open the various affections of one's mind, without reserve or disguise. There is something in disclosing to a friend the occasional emotions of one's heart, that wonderfully contributes to sooth and allay it's perturbations, in all it's most pensive or anxious moments. Nature, indeed, seems to have cast us with a general disposition to communication : though at the same time it must be acknowledged, there are few to whom one may safely be communicative. Have I not reason, then, to esteem it as one of the most desirable circumstances of my life, that I dare, without scruple, or danger, think aloud to Philotes ? It is merely to exercise that happy privilege, I now take up my pen ; and you must expect nothing in this letter but the picture

of my heart in one of it's splenetic hours. There are certain seasons, perhaps, in every man's life, when he is dissatisfied with himself and every thing around him, without being able to give a substantial reason for being so. At least I am unwilling to think, that this dark cloud, which at present hangs over my mind, is peculiar to my constitution, and never gathers in any breast but my own. It is much more, however, my concern to dissipate this vapour in myself, than to discover that it sometimes arises in others : as there is no disposition a man would rather endeavour to cherish, than a constant aptitude of being pleased. But my practice will not always credit my philosophy ; and I find it much easier to point out my distemper than to remove it. After all, is it not a mortifying consideration, that the powers of reason should be less prevalent than

than those of matter; and that a page of Seneca cannot raise the spirits, when a pint of claret will? It might, methinks, somewhat abate the insolence of human pride to consider, that it is but increasing or diminishing the velocity of certain fluids in the animal machine, to elate the soul with the gayest hopes, or sink her into the deepest despair; to depress the hero into a coward, or advance the coward into a hero. It is to some such mechanical cause I am inclined to attribute the present gloominess of my mind: at the same

time I will confess, there is something in that very consideration which gives strength to the fit, and renders it so much the more difficult to throw off. For, tell me, is it not a discouraging reflection to find one's self *servile* (as Shakespeare expresses it) to every *slight influence*, and the sport of every paltry atom? to owe the ease of one's mind not only to the disposition of one's own body, but almost to that of every other which surrounds us? Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XIV.

TO ORONTES,

THE passage you quote is entirely in my sentiments. I agree both with that celebrated author and yourself, that our Oratory is by no means in a state of perfection; and though it has much strength and solidity, that it may yet be rendered far more polished and affecting. The growth, indeed, of eloquence, even in those countries where she flourished most, has ever been exceedingly slow. Athens had been in possession of all the other polite improvements, long before her pretensions to the persuasive arts were in any degree considerable; as the earliest orator of note among the Romans did not appear sooner than about a century before Tully.

That great master of persuasion, taking notice of this remarkable circumstance, assigns it as an evidence of the superior difficulty of his favourite art. Possibly there may be some truth in the observation: but whatever the cause be, the fact, I believe, is undeniable. Accordingly eloquence has by no means made equal advances in our own country, with her sister arts; and though we have seen some excellent poets, and a few good painters, rise up amongst us, yet I know not whether our nation can supply us with a single orator of deserved eminence. One cannot but be surprized at this, when it is considered, that we have a profession set apart for the purposes of persuasion; and which not only affords the most animating and interesting topics of rhetoric, but wherein a talent of this kind would prove the likeliest, perhaps, of any other to obtain those ambitious prizes which were

thought to contribute so much to the successful progress of antient eloquence.

Among the principal defects of our English orators, their general disregard of harmony has, I think, been the least observed. It would be injustice indeed to deny that we have some performances of this kind amongst us, tolerably musical: but it must be acknowledged at the same time, that it is more the effect of accident than design, and rather a proof of the power of our language than of the art of our orators.

Dr. Tillotson, who is frequently mentioned as having carried this species of eloquence to it's highest perfection, seems to have had no sort of notion of rhetorical numbers: and may I venture, Orontes, to add, without hazarding the imputation of an affected singularity, that I think no man had ever less pretensions to genuine oratory, than this celebrated preacher? If any thing could raise a flame of eloquence in the breast of an orator, there is no occasion upon which, one should imagine, it would be more likely to break out, than in celebrating departed merit: yet the two sermons which he preached upon the death of Mr. Gouge and Dr. Whichcote are as cold and languid performances as were ever, perhaps, produced upon such an animating subject. One cannot indeed but regret, that he, who abounds with such noble and generous sentiments, should want the art of setting them off with all the advantage they deserve; that the sublime in morals should not be attended with a suitable elevation of language. The truth, however, is, his

words

words are frequently ill-chosen and almost always ill-placed; his periods are both tedious and unharmonious; as his metaphors are generally mean, and often ridiculous. It were easy to produce numberless instances in support of this assertion. Thus in his sermon preached before Queen Anne, when she was Princess of Denmark, he talks of *squeezing* a parable, *thrusting* religion by, *driving* a strict bargain with God, *sharking* shifts, &c. and speaking of the day of judgment, he describes the world as *cracking about our ears*. I cannot however but acknowledge, in justice to the oratorical character of this most valuable prelate, that there is a noble simplicity in some few of his sermons; as his excellent discourse on *sincerity* deserves to be mentioned with particular applause.

But to shew his deficiency in the article I am considering at present, the following stricture will be sufficient, among many others that might be cited to the same purpose. 'One might be apt,' says he, 'to think at first view, that this parable was *over done*, and wanted something of a due decorum; it being hardly credible, that a man, after he had been so mercifully and generously dealt *withal*, as upon his humble request to have so *huge* a debt so freely forgiven, should, whilst the memory of so much mercy was fresh upon him, even in the very next moment, *handle* his fellow-servant, who had made the same humble request to him which he had *done* to his Lord, with so much roughness and cruelty, for so inconsiderable a sum.'

This whole period, (not to mention other objections which might justly be raised against it) is unmusical throughout, but the concluding members, which ought to have been particularly flowing, are most miserably loose and disjointed. If the delicacy of Tully's ear was so exquisitely refined, as not always to be satisfied even when he read Demosthenes; how would it have been offended at the harshness and dissonance of so unharmonious a sentence.

Nothing, perhaps, throws our eloquence at a greater distance from that of the ancients, than this Gothic arrangement; as those wonderful effects, which sometimes attended their elocution, were, in all probability, chiefly owing to their ~~skill~~ in musical concords. It was by

the charm of numbers, united with the strength of reason, that Tully confounded the audacious Catiline, and silenced the eloquent Hortensius. It was this that deprived Curio of all power of recollection, when he rose up to oppose that great master of enchanting rhetoric: it was this, in a word, made even Cæsar himself tremble; nay, what is yet more extraordinary, made Cæsar alter his determined purpose, and acquit the man he had resolved to condemn.

You will not suspect that I attribute too much to the power of numerous composition, when you recollect the instance which Tully produces of it's wonderful effect. He informs us, you may remember, in one of his rhetorical treatises, that he was himself a witness of it's influence, as Carbo was once haranguing to the people. When that orator pronounced the following sentence, *Patris dictum sapiens, temeritas filii comprehēvit*—it was astonishing, says he, to observe the general applause which followed that harmonious close. A modern ear, perhaps would not be much affected upon this occasion; and, indeed, it is more than probable, that we are ignorant of the art of pronouncing that period with it's genuine emphasis and cadence. We are certain, however, that the music of it consisted in the *dischoree* with which it is terminated: for Cicero himself assures us, that if the final measure had been changed, and the words placed in a different order, their whole effect would have been absolutely destroyed.

This art was first introduced among the Greeks by Thrasyarchus, though some of the admirers of Isocrates attributed the invention to that orator. It does not appear to have been observed by the Romans till near the times of Tully, and even then it was by no means universally received. The ancient and less numerous manner of composition, had still many admirers, who were such enthusiasts to antiquity as to adopt her very defects. A disposition of the same kind may, perhaps, prevent it's being received with us; and while the archbishop shall maintain his authority as an orator, it is not to be expected that any great advancement will be made in this species of eloquence. That strength of understanding likewise, and solidity of reason, which is so eminently our national characteristic, may add somewhat

somewhat to the difficulty of reconciling us to a study of this kind; as at first glance it may seem to lead an orator from his grand and principal aim, and tempt him to make a sacrifice of sense to sound. It must be acknowledged, indeed, that in the times which succeeded the dissolution of the Roman republic, this art was so perverted from its true end as to become the single study of their enervated orators. Pliny the younger often complains of this contemptible affectation; and the polite author of that elegant dialogue which, with very little probability is attributed either to Tacitus or Quintilian, assures us it was the ridiculous boast of certain orators in the time of the declension of genuine eloquence, that their harangues were capable of being set to music, and sung upon the stage. But it must be

remembered, that the true end of this art I am recommending, is to aid, not to supersede reason; that it is so far from being necessarily effeminate, that it not only adds grace but strength to the powers of persuasion. For this purpose Tully and Quintilian, those great masters of numerous composition, have laid it down as a fixed and invariable rule, that it must never appear the effect of labour in the orator; that the tuneful flow of his periods must always seem the casual result of their disposition; and that it is the highest offence against the art, to weaken the expression, in order to give a more musical tone to the cadence. In short, that no unmeaning words are to be thrown in merely to fill up the requisite measure, but that they must still rise in sense as they improve in sound. I am, &c.

LETTER XV.

TO CLEORA.

AUGUST 11, 1738.

THOUGH it is but a few hours since I parted from my Cleora, yet I have already, you see, taken up my pen to write to her. You must not expect, however, in this, or in any of my future letters, that I say fine things to you; since I only intend to tell you true ones. My heart is too full to be regular, and too sincere to be ceremonious. I have changed the manner, not the style of my former conversations: and I write to you, as I used to talk to you, without form or art. Tell me then, with the same undissembled sincerity, what effect this absence has upon your usual cheerfulness? as I will honestly confess on

my own part, that I am too interested to with a circumstance, so little consistent with my own repose, should be altogether reconcileable to your's. I have attempted, however, to pursue your advice, and divert myself by the subject you recommended to my thoughts: but it is impossible, I perceive, to turn off the mind at once from an object, which it has long dwelt upon with pleasure. My heart, like a poor bird which is hunted from her nest, is still returning to the place of its affections, and after some vain efforts to fly off, settles again where all its cares and all its tenderness are centered. Adieu.

LETTER XIV.

TO PHILOTES.

AUGUST 20, 1739.

I FEAR I shall lose all my credit with you as a gardener, by this specimen which I venture to send you of the produce of my walls. The snails, indeed, have had more than their share of my peaches and nectarines this season; but will you not smile when I tell

you, that I deem it a sort of cruelty to suffer them to be destroyed? I should scarce dare to acknowledge this weakness, (as the generality of the world, no doubt, would call it) had I not experienced, by many agreeable instances, that I may safely lay open to you every
gentle

sentiment of my heart. To confess the truth then, I have some scruples with respect to the liberty we assume in the unlimited destruction of these lower orders of existence. I know not upon what principle of reason and justice, it is, that mankind have founded their right over the lives of every creature that is placed in a subordinate rank of being to themselves. Whatever claim they may have in right of food and self-defence, did they extend their privilege no farther than those articles would reasonably carry them, numberless beings might enjoy their lives in peace, who are now hurried out of them by the most wanton and unnecessary cruelties. I cannot, indeed, discover why it should be thought less inhumane to crush to death a harmless insect, whose single offence is that he eats that food which nature has prepared for it's sustenance; than it would be, were I to kill any more bulky creature for the same reason. There are few tempers so hardened to the impressions of humanity, as not to shudder at the thought of the latter; and yet the former is universally practised without the least check of compassion. This seems to arise from the gross error of supposing, that every creature is really in itself contemptible, which happens to be clothed with a body infinitely disproportionate to our own; not considering that *great and little* are merely relative terms. But the inimitable Shakespeare would teach us, that

The poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corp'ral suifrance feels a pang as great
As when a giant dies.

And this is not thrown out in the latitude of poetical imagination, but supported by the discoveries of the most improved philosophy: for there is every reason to believe that the sensations of many insects are as exquisite as those of creatures of far more enlarged dimensions; perhaps even more so. The millepedes, for instance, rolls itself round, upon the slightest touch; and the snail gathers in her horns upon the least approach of your hand. Are not these the strongest indications of *their sensibility*? and is

it any evidence of *cruelty*, that we are not therefore induced to treat them with a more sympathizing tenderness?

I was extremely pleased with a sentiment I met with the other day in honest Montaigne. That good-natured author remarks, that there is a certain general claim of kindness and benevolence which every species of creatures has a right to from us. It is to be regretted, that this generous maxim is not more attended to, in the affair of education, and pressed home upon tender minds in it's full extent and latitude. I am far, indeed, from thinking that the early delight which children discover in tormenting flies, &c. is a mark of any *innate* cruelty of temper; because this turn may be accounted for upon other principles, and it is entertaining unworthy notions of the Deity to suppose he forms mankind with a propensity to the most detestable of all dispositions. But most certainly, by being unrestrained in sports of this kind, they may acquire by habit what they never would have learned from nature, and grow up into a confirmed inattention to every kind of suffering but their own. Accordingly the supreme court of judicature at Athens thought an instance of this sort not below it's cognizance, and punished a boy for putting out the eyes of a poor bird, that had unhappily fallen into his hands.

It might be of service, therefore, it should seem, in order to awaken as early as possible in children an extensive sense of humanity, to give them a view of several sorts of insects as they may be magnified by the assistance of glasses, and to shew them that the same evident marks of wisdom and goodness prevail in the formation of the minutest insect, as in that of the most enormous Leviathan: that they are equally furnished with whatever is necessary not only to the preservation but the happiness of their beings in that class of existence to which Providence has assigned them: in a word, that the whole construction of their respective organs distinctly proclaims them the objects of the divine benevolence, and therefore that they justly ought to be so of ours, I am, &c.

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LETTER XVII.

TO THE SAME.

FEBRUARY 1, 1738.

All heav'n,

And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selectest influence! M.L.T.

YOU see how much I trust to your good-nature and your judgment, whilst I am the only person, perhaps, among your friends, who have ventured to omit a congratulation in form. I am not, however, intentionally guilty; for I really designed you a visit before now: but hearing that your acquaintance flowed in upon you from all quarters, I thought it would be more agreeable to you, as well as to myself, if I waited till the inundation was abated. But if I have not joined in the general voice of congratulation, I have not, however, omitted the sincere, though silent wishes, which the warmest friendship can suggest to a heart entirely in your interests. Had I not long since forsaken the regions of poetry, I would tell you, in the language of that country, how often I have said, May

But plain prose will do as well for plain truth; and there is no occasion for any art to persuade you, that you have upon every occurrence of your life, my best good wishes. I hope shortly to have an opportunity of making myself better known to Aspasia. When I am so, I shall rejoice with her on the choice she has made of a man, from whom I will undertake to promise her all the happiness which the state she has entered into can afford. Thus much I do not scruple to say of her husband to you: the rest I had rather say to her. If upon any occasion you should mention me, let it be in the character which I most value myself upon, that of your much obliged and very affectionate friend.

LETTER XVIII.

TO HORTENSIVS.

JULY, 5, 1739.

I Can by no means subscribe to the sentiments of your last letter, nor agree with you in thinking, that the love of fame is a passion which either reason or religion condemns. I confess, indeed, there are some who have represented it as inconsistent with both; and I remember in particular, the excellent author of *The Religion of Nature delineated*, has treated it as highly irrational and absurd. As the passage falls in so thoroughly with your own turn of thought, you will have no objection, I imagine, to my quoting it at large; and I give it you, at the same time, as a very great authority on your side. 'In reality,' (says that writer) 'the man is not known ever the more to posterity, because his name is transmitted to them: He doth not live because his name does. When it is said, Julius Cæsar subdued Gaul, conquered Pompey, &c. it is the same thing as to say, the conqueror of Pompey was Julius Cæsar, i. e.,

Cæsar and the conqueror of Pompey is the same thing; Cæsar is as much known by one designation as by the other. The amount then is only this: that the conqueror of Pompey conquered Pompey; or somebody conquered somebody; or rather, since Pompey is as little known now as Cæsar, *somebody* conquered *somebody*. Such a poor business is this boasted immortality! and such is the thing called glory among us! To discerning men this fame is mere air, and what they despise, if not shun.'

But surely, *tovere to consider too curiously* (as Horatio says to Hamlet) *to consider thus*. For though fame with posterity should be, in the strict analysis of it, no other than what it is here described, a mere uninteresting proposition, amounting to nothing more than that *somebody* acted meritoriously; yet it would not necessarily follow, that true philosophy would banish the desire of it from the human breast. For this passion

passion may be (as most certainly it is) wisely implanted in our species, notwithstanding the corresponding object should in reality be very different from what it appears in imagination. Do not many of our most refined and even contemplative pleasures owe their existence to our mistakes? It is but extending (I will not say improving) some of our senses to a higher degree of acuteness than we now possess them, to make the fairest views of nature, or the noblest productions of art, appear horrid and deformed. To see things as they truly are in themselves are, would not always, perhaps, be of advantage to us in the intellectual world, any more than in the natural. But, after all, who shall certainly assure us, that the pleasure of virtuous fame dies with it's possessor, and reaches not to a farther scene of existence? There is nothing, it should seem, either absurd or unphilosophical in supposing it possible at least, that the praises of the good and the judicious, *that sweetest music to an honest ear* in this world, may be echoed back to the mansions of the next: that the poet's description of Fame may be literally true, and though she walks upon earth, she may yet lift her head into heaven.

But can it be reasonable to extinguish a passion which nature has universally lighted up in the human breast, and which we constantly find to burn with most strength and brightness in the noblest and best formed bosoms? Accordingly Revelation is so far from endeavouring (as you suppose) to eradicate the seed which nature has thus deeply planted, that she rather seems, on the contrary, to cherish and forward

it's growth. To be *exalted with honour*, and to be had in *everlasting remembrance*, are in the number of those encouragements which the Jewish dispensation offered to the virtuous; as the person from whom the sacred Author of the Christian system received his birth, is herself represented as rejoicing that *all generations should call her blessed*.

To be convinced of the great advantage of cherishing this high regard to posterity, this noble desire of an after-life in the breath of others, one need only look back upon the history of the ancient Greeks and Romans. What other principle was it, Hortensius, which produced that exalted strain of virtue in *those* days, that may well serve as a model to *these*? Was it not the *consentans laus bonorum*, the *incorrupta vox bene judicantium*, (as Tully calls it) the concurrent approbation of the good, the uncorrupted applause of the wise, that animated their most generous pursuits?

To confess the truth, I have been ever inclined to think it a very dangerous attempt, to endeavour to lessen the motives of right acting, or to raise any suspicion concerning their solidity. The tempers and dispositions of mankind are so extremely different, that it seems necessary they should be called into action by a variety of incitements. Thus, while some are willing to wed Virtue for her personal charms, others are engaged to take her for the sake of her expected dowry: and since her followers and admirers have so little to hope from her in present, it were pity, methinks, to reason them out of any imaginary advantage in reversion. Farewel. I am, &c.

LETTER XIX.

TO CLEORA.

I Think, Cleora, you are the truest female hermit I ever knew. At least I do not remember to have met with any among your sex of the same order with yourself; for as to the religious on the other side of the water, I can by no means esteem them worthy of being ranked in your number. They are a sort of people who either have seen nothing of the world, or too much; and where is the merit of giving up what

one is not acquainted with, or what one is weary of? But you are a far more illustrious recluse, who have entered into the world with innocency, and retired from it with good humour. That sort of life, which makes so amiable a figure in the description of poets and philosophers, and which kings and heroes have professed to aspire after, Cleora actually enjoys: she lives her own, free from the follies and impertinences, the hurry and

disappointments of false pursuits of every kind. How much do I prefer one hour of such solitude to all the glittering, glaring, gaudy days of the ambitious? I shall not envy them their gold and their silver, their precious jewels, and their changes of raiment, while you permit me to join you and Alexander in your hermitage. I hope to do so on Sunday evening, and attend you to the siege of Tyre, or the deserts of Africa, or wherever else your hero shall lead you. But should I find you in more elevated company, and engaged with the rapturous * * * *, even then, I hope, you will not refuse to admit me of your party. If I have not yet a proper *gout* for the mystic writers, perhaps I am not quite incapable of acquiring one; and as I have every thing of the hermit in my composition except the enthusiasm, it is

not impossible but I may catch that also, by the assistance of you and * * * *. I desire you would receive me as a probationer at least, and as one who is willing, if he is worthy, to be initiated into your secret doctrines. I think I only want this taste and a relish of the marvellous, to be wholly in your sentiments. Possibly I may be so happy as to attain both in good time: I fancy at least there is a close connection between them, and I shall not despair of obtaining the one, if I can by any means arrive at the other. But which must I endeavour at first? shall I prepare for the mystic by commencing with the romance, or would you advise me to begin with Malbranch before I undertake Clelia? Suffer me, however, ere I enter the regions of fiction, to bear testimony to one constant truth, by assuring you that I am, &c.

LETTER XX.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

OCTOBER 10, 1743.

I Have often mentioned to you the pleasure I received from Mr. Pope's translation of the *Iliad*: but my admiration of that inimitable performance has increased upon me, since you tempted me to compare the copy with the original. To say of this noble work, that it is the best which ever appeared of the kind, would be speaking in much lower terms than it deserves; the world perhaps scarce ever before saw a truly poetical translation: for, as Denham observes,

Such is our pride, our folly, or our fate,
That few, but those who cannot write, translate.

Mr. Pope, seems in most places, to have been inspired with the same sublime spirit that animates his original; as he often takes fire from a single hint in his author, and blazes out even with a stronger and brighter flame of poetry. Thus the character of Thersites, as it stands in the English *Iliad*, is heightened, I think, with more masterly strokes of satire than appear in the Greek; as many of those similes in Homer, which would appear, perhaps, to a modern eye too naked and unornamented, are painted by Pope in all the beautiful drapery of the most graceful metaphor. With what propriety of figure, for in-

stance, has he raised the following comparison!

Εὐρ' οὐκ ἀνέμῳ Νότος κλέχεται πτερύγεσσιν,
Ποικίλῃν ἐπὶ φέρον, κλέβῃ δὲ τὴν νύκτος αἴματιν,
Τόσσον τῆς τ' ἐπιδυσσεύει, ὅσσον τ' ἐπὶ λαοοφύγῃν
Ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπὸ πύσσιν κρησσύνης ὤρεσσι' αἰετὸς
ἔρχομαι.
Ill. iii. 10

Thus from his flaggy wings when Eurus sheds
A night of vapours round the mountain-heads,
Swift-gliding mists the dusky fields invade;
To thieves more grateful than the midnight
shade:

While scarce the swains their feeding flocks survey,
Lost and confus'd amidst the thicken'd day:
So wrapt in gath'ring dust the Grecian train,
A moving cloud, swept on and hid the plain.

When Mars, being wounded by Diomed, flies back to heaven, Homer compares him in his passage to a dark cloud raised by summer heats, and driven by the wind.

Ὀν δ' ἐκ νεφελῶν ὁρᾷ τὴν φαιδρὴν οὐρανὸν,
Καυμάλης ἐξ ἀτμῆος ὕστερος ἀνέμῳ.
Il. v. 264.

The inimitable translator improves this image, by throwing in some circumstances, which, though not in the original, are exactly in the spirit of Homer:

As vapours, blown by Aufter's sultry breath,
Pregnant with plagues, and shedding seeds of
death,
Beneath the rage of burning Sirius rise,
Choke the parch'd earth, and blacken all
the skies :
In such a cloud the god, from combat driv'n,
High o'er the dully whirlwind scales the
heav'n.

There is a description in the eighth
book which Eustathius, it seems, es-
teemed the most beautiful night-piece
that could be found in poetry. If I am
not greatly mistaken, however, I can
produce a finer : and I am persuaded
even the warmest admirer of Homer will
allow, the following lines are inferior
to the corresponding ones in the transla-
tion :

Ως δ' οτ' ἐν μέσσην αἴθρη φαιάνη ἀμφοῖν
Φαεινὴν ἀνιπταμένην, οὔτι τ' ὑπέρθε νύμφος αὐτῆς,
Ἐκ τ' ἔρπον σκιδότα σκοπία καὶ παύοντες αὐτῆς,
Καὶ κατὰ μῆνιν δ' αὖτ' ὑπερσέγει ἀσπόμενος
αὐτῆς,
Πῶτα δὲ τ' εὐδεται αἴθρη, γαγυὴ δὲ τε φωνῆ
ποιμῶν.
Il. viii. 551.

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
O'er heav'n's clear azure spreads her sacred
light ;
When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene,
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And stars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole :
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
And tip with silver ev'ry mountain's head ;
Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise,
A flood of glory bursts from all the skies ;
The conscious swains, rejoicing in the light,
Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light.

I fear the enthusiastic admirers of
Homer would look upon me with much
indignation, were they to hear me
speak of any thing in modern lan-
guage as equal to the strength and ma-
jesty of that great father of poetry. But
the following passage having been quot-
ed by a celebrated author of antiquity,
as an instance of the true sublime, I will
leave it to you to determine whether the
translation has not at least as just a
claim to that character as the original.

Ως δ' οτ' ἐν μέσσην αἴθρη φαιάνη ἀμφοῖν
Φαεινὴν ἀνιπταμένην, οὔτι τ' ὑπέρθε νύμφος αὐτῆς,
Ἐκ τ' ἔρπον σκιδότα σκοπία καὶ παύοντες αὐτῆς,
Καὶ κατὰ μῆνιν δ' αὖτ' ὑπερσέγει ἀσπόμενος
αὐτῆς,
Πῶτα δὲ τε εὐδεται αἴθρη, γαγυὴ δὲ τε φωνῆ
ποιμῶν.
As torrents roll, increas'd by num'rous rills,
With rage impetuous down their echoing hills,

Rush to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,
Roar thro' a thousand channels to the main ;
The distant shepherd trembling hears the
sound :

So mix both hofts, and so their cries rebound.

There is no ancient author more likely
to betray an injudicious interpreter into
meannesses, than Homer ; as it requires
the utmost skill and address to preserve
that venerable air of simplicity which is
one of the characteristical marks of that
poet, without sinking the expression or
the sentiment into contempt. Anti-
quity will furnish a very strong instance
of the truth of this observation, in a sin-
gle line which is preserved to us from a
translation of the Iliad by one Labeo, a
favourite poet, it seems, of Nero. It is
quoted by an old scholiast upon Persius,
and happens to be a version of the fol-
lowing passage in the fourth book :

Ωμιον βαλβυδὺς Πριάμου Πριάμου τε παῖδας.

which Nero's admirable poet rendered
literally thus :

*Crudum manduces Priamum Priamique pi-
smos.*

I need not indeed have gone so far back
for my instance : a Labeo of our own
nation would have supplied me with one
much nearer at hand. Ogilby or Hobbs
(I forget which) has translated this very
verse in the same ridiculous manner :

And eat up Priam and his children all.

But among many other passages of
this sort I observed one in the same book,
which raised my curiosity to examine in
what manner Mr. Pope had conducted
it. Juno, in a general council of the
gods, thus accosts Jupiter :

Αἰφύλαξ Κρονίδη,
Πῶς εἴ τις αἰεὶ Διὶ καὶ πατρὶ πότ' ἀνταγῶν
Ἰέρει, οὐδέ μοι μάγιστον κακὸν εἴη μοι σῆμα
Λαοὶ ἀντιβῆναι, Πριάμου κτεῖνα, τῶο τε ποιμῆος.

which is as much as if she had said in
plain English, ' Why surely, Jupiter,
' you won't be so cruel as to render in-
' effectual all my expence of labour and
' sweat. Have I not tired both my
' horses, in order to raise forces to ruin
' Priam and his family ?' It requires
the most delicate touches imaginable, to
raise such a sentiment as this into any
tolerable degree of dignity. But a skill-
ful artist knows how to embellish the
most ordinary subject ; and what would
be

be low and spiritless from a less masterly pencil, becomes pleasing and graceful when worked up by Mr. Pope's.

Shall then, O tyrant of th' æthereal plain,
My schemes, my labours and my hopes be vain?
Have I for this shook Ilion with alarms,
Assembled nations, set two worlds in arms?
To spread the war I flew from shore to shore,
Th' immortal couriers scarce the labour bore.

But to shew you that I am not so enthusiastic an admirer of this glorious performance, as to be blind to its imperfections; I will venture to point out a passage or two (amongst others which might be mentioned) wherein Mr. Pope's usual judgment seems to have failed him.

When Iris is sent to inform Helen that Paris and Menelaus were going to decide the fate of both nations by single combat, and were actually upon the point of engaging; Homer describes her as hastily throwing a veil over her face, and flying to the Scæan gate, from whence she might have a full view of the field of battle.

Ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅτε ἔρχεται καλὸν ἄμεινον ὄντα,
Ἢλμας' ἐκ Πάριος, τὴν κατὰ δακρυ χέουσα.
Ὀκ' οὐτ' αἶψα τῆρι καὶ ἀμφοτέρω δὲ πτόλο, &c.
Ἀλλὰ δ' ἐκ τῆς ἑσθ' ἔκκευ, ὅθ' Ἰδαίου πύλου πύει.

Il. iii. 142.

Nothing could possibly be more interesting to Helen, than the circumstances in which she is here represented: it was necessary therefore to exhibit her, as Homer we see has, with much eagerness and impetuosity in her motion. But what can be more calm and quiet than the attitude wherein the Helen of Mr. Pope appears?

O'er her fair face a snowy veil she threw,
And softly sighing from the loom withdrew:
Her handmaids ———— wait
Her silent footsteps to the Scæan gate.

Those expressions of speed and impetuosity which occur so often in the original lines, viz. *αἶψα*—*αἶψα*—*αἶψα*, would have been sufficient, one should have imagined, to have guarded a translator from falling into an impropriety of this kind.

This brings to my mind another instance of the same nature, where our English poet, by not attending to the particular expression of his author, has given us a picture of a very different kind than what Homer intended. In the first Iliad the reader is introduced into a council of the Grecian chiefs,

where very warm debates arise between Agamemnon and Achilles. As nothing was likely to prove more fatal to the Grecians than a dissension between those two princes, the venerable old Nestor is represented as greatly alarmed at the consequences of this quarrel, and rising up to moderate between them with a vivacity much beyond his years. This circumstance Homer has happily intimated by a single word:

Νέστορ δὲ Νέστωρ

ΑΝΟΡΤΥΞΕ.

Upon which one of the commentators very justly observes—*Ut in re magna et periculosa, non placide assurgentem facit, sed prorumpentem senem quoque*. A circumstance which Horace seems to have had particularly in his view in the epistle to Lollius:

Nestor componere lites

Inter Peleiden festinat et inter Atiden.

Ep. i. 2.

This beauty Mr. Pope has utterly overlooked, and substituted an idea very different from that which the verb *ανόρτυξε* suggests: he renders it,

Slow from his seat arose the Pylian sage.

But a more unfortunate word could scarcely have been joined with *arose*, as it destroys the whole spirit of the piece, and is just the reverse of what both the occasion and the original required.

I doubt, Euphronius, you are growing weary: will you have patience, however, whilst I mention one observation more, and I will interrupt you no longer?

When Menelaus and Paris enter the lists, Pope says,

Amidst the dreadful vale the chiefs advance,
All pale with rage, and shake the threatening lance.

In the original it is,

Εὐκλειδὸς Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν ἑταίρων
Δίονος ἐπὶ πύλῳ.

Il. iii. 344.

But does not the expression—*all pale with rage*—call up a very contrary idea to *δίωνος ἐπὶ πύλῳ*? The former seems to suggest to one's imagination the ridiculous passion of a couple of female scolds; whereas the latter conveys the terrifying image of two indignant heroes, animated with calm and deliberate valour. Farewell. I am, &c.

LET.

LETTER XXI.

TO CLEORA.

MARCH 3, 1739.

AFTER having read your last letter, I can no longer doubt of the truth of those salutary effects, which are said to have been produced by the application of certain written words. I have myself experienced the possibility of the thing: and a few strokes of your pen have abated a pain, which of all others is the most uneasy, and the most difficult to be relieved; even the pain, my Clara, of the mind. To sympathize with my sufferings, as Cleora kindly assures me she does, is to assuage them; and half the uneasiness of her absence is removed, when she tells me that she regrets mine.

Since I thus assuredly find that you can work miracles, I will believe likewise that you have the gift of prophecy; and I can no longer despair that the time will come, when we shall again meet, since you have absolutely pronounced that it will. I have ventured, therefore, (as you will see by my last letter) already to name the day. In the mean time, I amuse myself with doing every thing that looks like a preparation for my journey; *e già apro le braccia per stringervi affettuosamente al mio seno*.

The truth is, you are every instant in my thoughts, and each occurrence that arises suggests you to my remembrance. If I see a clear sky, I wish it may extend to you; and if I observe a cloudy one, I am uneasy lest my Cleora should be exposed to it. I never read an interesting story, or a pertinent remark, that I do not long to communicate it to you, and learn to double my relish by hearing your judicious observations. I cannot take a turn in my garden, but every walk calls you into my mind. Ah, Cleora! I never view those scenes

of our former conversations, without a sigh. Judge then how often I sigh, when every object that surrounds me brings you fresh to my imagination. You remember the attitude in which the faithful Penelope is drawn in Pope's *Odyssey*, when she goes to fetch the bow of Ulysses for the suitors:

Across her knees she laid the well-known bow,
And pensive sat, and tears began to flow.

I find myself in numberless such tender reveries; and if I were ever so much disposed to banish you from my thoughts, it would be impossible I should do so, in a place where every thing that presents itself to me, reminds me that you were once here. I must not expect (I ought not, indeed, for the sake of your repose to wish) to be thus frequently and thus fondly the subject of your meditations: but may I not hope that you employ a few moments at least of every day, in thinking of him whose whole attention is fixed upon you?

I have sent you the history of the Conquest of Mexico, in English, which, as it is translated by so good a hand, will be equally pleasing and less troublesome, than reading it in the original. I long to be of this party in your expedition to the new world, as I lately was in your conquests of Italy. How happily could I sit by Cleora's side, and pursue the Spaniards in their triumphs, as I formerly did the Romans; or make a transition from a nation of heroes to a republic of ants! Glorious days indeed! when we passed whole mornings either with dictators or butterflies; and sometimes sent out a colony of Romans, and sometimes of emmits! Adieu. I am, &c,

LETTER XXII.

TO PALEMON.

DECEMBER 13, 1740.

THOUGH I am not convinced by your arguments, I am charmed by your eloquence; and admire the

preacher at the same time that I condemn the doctrine. But there is no sort of persons whose opinions one is more inclined

clined to with right, than those who are ingeniously in the wrong; who have the art to add grace to error, and can dignify mistakes.

Forgive me then, Palemon, if I am more than commonly solicitous that you should review the sentiments you advanced, (I will not say, supported) with so much elegance in your last letter, and that I press you to reconsider your notions again and again. Can I fail, indeed, to wish that you may find reason to renounce an opinion which may possibly one day or other deprive me of a friend, and my country of a patriot? while Providence, perhaps, would yet have spared him to both. Can I fail to regret, that I should hold one of the most valuable enjoyments of my life upon a tenure more than ordinarily precarious, and that, besides those numberless accidents by which chance may snatch you from the world, a gloomy sky or a cross event may determine Palemon to put an end to a life, which all who have been a witness to, must for ever admire.

But, 'Does the Supreme Being' (you ask) 'dispense his bounty upon conditions different from all other benefactors, and will he force a gift upon me which is no longer acceptable?'

Let me demand in return, Whether a creature, so confined in it's perceptions as man, may not mistake his true interest, and reject, from a partial regard, what would be well worth accepting upon a more comprehensive view? May not even a mortal benefactor better understand the value of that present he offers, than the person to whom it is tendered? And shall the supreme Author of all beneficence be esteemed less wise in distinguishing the worth of those grants he confers? I agree with you, indeed, that we were called into existence in order to receive happiness: but I can by no means infer from thence, that we are at liberty to resign our being whenever it becomes a burden. On the contrary, those premises seem to lead to a conclusion directly opposite; and if the gracious Author of my life created me with an intent to make me happy, does it not necessarily follow, that I shall most certainly obtain that privilege, if I do not justly forfeit it by my own misconduct? Numberless ends may be answered in the schemes of Providence, by turning aside or interrupting that stream of bounty, which our limited reason can

in no sort discover. How presumptuous then must it be, to throw back a grant upon the hands of the great Governor of the universe, merely because we do not immediately feel, or understand, it's full advantages!

That it is the intention of the Deity we should remain in this state of being till his summons calls us away, seems as evident as that we at first entered into it by his command: for we can no more continue, than we could begin to exist, without the concurrence of the same supreme interposition. While, therefore, the animal powers do not cease to perform those functions to which they were directed by their great Author, it may justly, I think, be concluded, that it is his design they should not.

Still, however, you urge, 'That by putting a period to your own existence here, you only alter the modification of matter; and how (you ask) is the order of Providence disturbed by changing the combination of a parcel of atoms from one figure to another?'

But surely, Palemon, there is a fallacy in this reasoning: suicide is something more than changing the component parts of the animal machine. It is striking out a spiritual substance from that rank of beings wherein the wise Author of nature has placed it, and forcibly breaking in upon some other order of existence. And as it is impossible for the limited powers of reason to penetrate the designs of Providence, it can never be proved that this is not disturbing the schemes of nature. We possibly may be, and indeed most probably are, connected with some higher rank of creatures: now philosophy will never be able to determine, that those connections may not be disconcerted by prematurely quitting our present mansion.

One of the strongest passions implanted in human nature, is the fear of death. It seems, indeed, to be placed by Providence as a sort of guard to retain mankind within their appointed station. Why else should it so universally and almost invariably operate? It is observable that no such affection appears in any species of beings below us. They have no temptation, or no ability, to desert the post assigned to them, and therefore, it should seem they have no checks of this kind to keep them within their prescribed limits. This general horror then in mankind at the apprehension of their dissolution,

dissolution, carries with it, I think, a very strong presumptive argument in favour of the opinion I am endeavouring to maintain. For if it were not given to us for the purpose I have supposed, what other can it serve? Can it be imagined that the benevolent Author of nature would have so deeply wove it into our constitution, only to interrupt our present enjoyments?

I cannot, I confess, discover how the practice of suicide can be justified upon any principle, except upon that of downright atheism. If we suppose a good Providence to govern the world, the consequence is undeniable, that we must entirely rely upon it. If we imagine an evil one to prevail, what chance is there of finding that happiness in another scene, which we have in vain sought for in this? The same malevolent omnipo-

tence can as easily pursue us in the next remove, as persecute us in this our first station.

Upon the whole, Palemon, prudence strongly forbids so hazardous an experiment as that of being our own executioners. We know the worst that can happen in supporting life under all its most wretched circumstances: and if we should be mistaken in thinking it our duty to endure a load, which, in truth, we may securely lay down; it is an error extremely limited in its consequences. They cannot extend beyond this present existence, and possibly may end much earlier: whereas no mortal can, with the least degree of assurance, pronounce what may not be the effects of acting agreeably to the contrary opinion. I am, &c.

LETTER XXIII.

TO CLYTANDER.

SEPTEMBER 23, 1733.

I Am by no means in the sentiments of that Grecian of your acquaintance, who, as often as he was pressed to marry, replied, either that it was too soon or too late: and I think my favourite author, the honest Montaigne, a little too severe when he observes upon this story, *qu'il faut refuser l'opportunité à toute action importante*: for,

Higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem.

MILTON.

However, I am not adventurous enough to join with those friends you mention, who are soliciting you, it seems, to look out for an engagement of this kind. It is an union which requires so much delicacy in the cementing; it is a commerce where so many nice circumstances must concur to render it successful; that I would not venture to pronounce of any two persons, that they are qualified for each other.

I do not know a woman in the world who seems more formed to render a man of sense and generosity happy in this state than Amasia: yet I should scarcely have courage to recommend even Amasia to my friend. You have seen her, I dare say, a thousand times; but I am per-

suaded she never attracted your particular observation, for she is in the number of those who are ever overlooked in a crowd. As often as I converse with her, she puts me in mind of the golden age: there is an innocency and simplicity in all her words and actions, that equals any thing the poets have described of those pure and artless times. Indeed, the greatest part of her life has been spent much in the same way as the early inhabitants of the world, in that blameless period of it, used, we are told, to dispose of theirs; under the shade and shelter of her own venerable oaks, and in those rural amusements which are sure to produce a confirmed habit both of health and cheerfulness. Amasia never said, or attempted to say, a sprightly thing in all her life; but she has done ten thousand generous ones: and if she is not the most conspicuous figure at an assembly, she never envied or malign'd those who are. Her heart is all tenderness and benevolence: no success ever attended any of her acquaintance, which did not fill her bosom with the most disinterested complacency; as no misfortune ever reached her knowledge, that she did not relieve or participate by her generosity. If ever she should fall into the hands of a man she loves, (and I am per-

E

suaded

sued she would esteem it the worst kind of prostitution to resign herself into any other) her whole life would be one continued series of kindness and compliance. The humble opinion she has of her own uncommon merit, would make her so much the more sensible of her husband's; and those little submissions on his side, which a woman of more pride and spirit would consider only as a claim of right, would be esteemed by Amasia as so many

additional motives of her love and gratitude.

But if I dwell any longer upon this amiable picture, I may be in danger, perhaps, of resembling that ancient artist, who grew enamoured of the production of his own pencil: for my security, therefore, as well as to put an end to your trouble, it will be best, I believe, to stop her. I am, &c.

LETTER XXIV.

TO ORONTES.

I Was apprehensive my last had given you but too much occasion of recollecting the remark of one of your admired ancients, that 'the art of eloquence is taught by man,' but it is the 'Gods alone that inspire the wisdom of silence.' That wisdom, however, you are not willing I should yet practise; and you must needs, it seems, have my farther sentiments upon the subject of Oratory. Be it then as my friend requires; but let him remember, it is a hazardous thing to put some men upon talking on a favourite topic.

One of the most pleasing exercises of the imagination, is that wherein she is employed in comparing distinct ideas, and discovering their various resemblances. There is no single perception of the mind that is not capable of an infinite number of considerations in reference to other objects; and it is in the novelty and variety of these unexpected connections, that the richness of a writer's genius is chiefly displayed. A vigorous and lively fancy does not tamely confine itself to the idea which lies before it, but looks beyond the immediate object of it's contemplation, and observes how it stands in conformity with numberless others. It is the prerogative of the human mind thus to bring it's images together, and compare the several circumstances of similitude that attend them. By this means Eloquence exercises a kind of magic power; she can raise innumerable beauties from the most barren subjects, and give the grace of novelty to the most common. The imagination is thus kept awake by the most agreeable motion, and entertained with

a thousand different views both of art and nature, which still terminate upon the principal object. For this reason I prefer the metaphor to the simile, as a far more pleasing method of illustration. In the former, the action of the mind is less languid, as it is employed at one and the same instant in comparing the resemblance with the idea it attends; whereas, in the latter, it's operations are more slow, being obliged to stand still as it were, in order to contemplate first the principal object, and then it's corresponding image.

Of all the flowers, however, that embellish the regions of eloquence, there is none of a more tender and delicate nature; as there is nothing wherein a fine writer is more distinguished from one of an ordinary class, than in the conduct and application of this figure. He is at liberty, indeed, to range through the whole compass of creation, and collect his images from every object that surrounds him. But though he may be thus amply furnished with materials, great judgment is required in chusing them: for to render a metaphor perfect, it must not only be apt, but pleasing; it must entertain, as well as enlighten. Mr. Dryden, therefore, can hardly escape the imputation of a very unpardonable breach of delicacy, when, in the dedication of his Juvenal, he observes to the Earl of Dorset, that 'some bad poems carry their owners marks about them--' 'some brand or other on this buttock or that ear, that it is notorious who are the owners of the cattle.' The poet Manilius seems to have raised an image of the same injudicious kind, in that compliment

compliment which he pays to Homer in the following verses :

*Cujusque ex ore profusus
Omnis posteritas latices in carmine duxit.*

I could never read these lines without calling to mind those grotesque heads, which are fixed to the roof of the old building of King's College in Cambridge; which the ingenious architect has represented in the act of vomiting out the rain, that falls through certain pipes most judiciously stuck in their mouths for that purpose. Mr. Addison recommends a method of trying the propriety of a metaphor, by drawing it out in visible representation. Accordingly, I think this curious conceit of the builder might be employed to the advantage of the youth in that university, and serve for as proper an illustration of the absurdity of the poet's image, as that ancient picture which Ælian mentions, where Homer was figured with a stream running from the mouth, and a group of poets lapping it up at a distance.

But besides a certain decorum which is requisite to constitute a perfect metaphor, a writer of true taste and genius will always single out the most obvious images, and place them in the most unobserved points of resemblance. Accordingly, all allusions which point to the more abstruse branches of the arts or sciences, and with which none can be supposed to be acquainted but those who have gone far into the deeper studies, should be carefully avoided, not only as pedantic, but impertinent; as they pervert the single use of this figure, and add neither grace nor force to the idea they would elucidate. The most pleasing metaphors, therefore, are those which are derived from the more frequent occurrences of art or nature, or the civil transactions and customs of mankind. Thus how expressive, yet at the same time how familiar, is that image which Otway has put into the mouth of Metellus, in his play of Caius Marius, where he calls Sulpicius

That mad wild bull whom Marius lets loose
On each occasion, when he'd make Rome
feel him,

To toss our laws and liberties i' th' air.

But I never met with a more agreeable, or a more significant allusion, than one in Quintus Curtius, which is borrowed

from the most ordinary object in common life. That author represents Craterus as dissuading Alexander from continuing his Indian expedition, against enemies too contemptible, he tells him, for the glory of his arms; and concludes his speech with the following beautiful thought: *Cito gloria obsolescit in sordidis hostibus; nec quidquam indignum est quam consumi eam ubi non potest offendi.* Now I am got into Latin quotations, I cannot forbear mentioning a most beautiful passage, which I lately had the pleasure of reading, and which I will venture to produce as equal to any thing of the same kind, either in ancient or modern composition. I met with it in the speech of a young orator, to whom I have the happiness to be related, and who will one day, I persuade myself, prove as great an honour to his country, as he is at present to that learned society of which he is a member. He is speaking of the writings of a celebrated prelate, who received his education in that famous seminary to which he belongs, and illustrates the peculiar elegance which distinguishes all that author's performances, by the following just and pleasing assemblage of diction and imagery: *In quodcumque opus se parabat (et per omnia sane versatile illius se duxit ingenium) nescio quâ luce sibi soli propria, et illuminavit; baud dissimili ei aureo Titiani radio, qui per totam tabulam gliscens eam verè suam denunciat.* As there is nothing more entertaining to the imagination than the productions of the fine arts; there is no kind of similitudes or metaphors which are in general more striking, than those which allude to their properties and effects. It is with great judgment, therefore, that the ingenious author of the dialogue concerning the Decline of Eloquence among the Romans, recommends to his orator a general acquaintance with the whole circle of the polite arts. A knowledge of this sort furnishes an author with illustrations of the most agreeable kind, and sets a gloss upon his compositions which enlivens them with singular grace and spirit.

Were I to point out the beauty and efficacy of metaphorical language, by particular instances, I should rather draw my examples from the moderns than the ancients; the latter being scarcely, I think, so exact and delicate in this article of composition as the former. The

great improvements, indeed, in natural knowledge, which have been made in these later ages, have opened a vein of metaphor entirely unknown to the ancients, and enriched the fancy of modern wits with a new stock of the most pleasing ideas: a circumstance which must give them a very considerable advantage over the Greeks and Romans. I am sure at least, of all the writings with which I have been conversant, the works of Mr. Addison will afford the most abundant supply of this kind, in all its variety and perfection. Truth and beauty of imagery is, indeed, his characteristic distinction, and the principal point of eminence which raises his style above that of every author in any language that has fallen within my notice. He is every where highly figurative; yet, at the same time, he is the most easy and perspicuous writer I have ever perused. The reason is, his images are always taken from the most natural and familiar appearances; as they are chosen with the utmost delicacy and judgment. Suffer me only to mention one out of a thousand I could name, as it appears to me the finest and most expressive that ever language conveyed. It is in one of his inimitable papers upon Paradise Lost, where he is taking notice of those changes in nature which the author of that truly divine poem describes as immediately succeeding the fall. Among other prodigies, Milton represents the sun in an eclipse; and at the same time a bright cloud in the western region of the heavens descending with a band of angels. Mr. Addison, in order to shew his author's art and judgment in the conduct and disposition of this sublime scenery, observes, 'The whole theatre of nature is darkened, that this glorious machine may appear in all its lustre and magnificence.' I know not, Orontes, whether you will agree in sentiment with me; but I must confess I am at a loss which to admire most upon this occasion, the poet or the critic.

There is a double beauty in images of this kind when they are not only metaphors, but allusions. I was much pleased with an instance of this uncommon species, in a little poem intitled *The Spleen*. The author of that piece, (who has thrown together more original thoughts than I ever read in the same compass of lines) speaking of the ad-

vantages of exercise in dissipating those gloomy vapours, which are so apt to hang upon some minds, employs the following image—

Throw but a stone, the giant dies.

You will observe, Orontes, that the metaphor here is conceived with great propriety of thought, if we consider it only in its primary view; but when we see it pointing still farther, and hinting at the story of David and Goliath, it receives a very considerable improvement from this double application.

It must be owned, some of the greatest authors, both ancient and modern, have made many remarkable slips in the management of this figure, and have sometimes expressed themselves with as much impropriety as an honest sailor of my acquaintance, a captain of a privateer, who wrote an account to his owners of an engagement, in which he had the good fortune, he told them, of having only one of his hands shot through the nose. The great oration therefore should be, never to join any idea to a figurative expression, which would not be applicable to it in a literal sense. Thus Cicero, in his treatise *De Claris Oratoribus*, speaking of the family of the Scipios, is guilty of an impropriety of this kind; *O generosam stirpem, says he, et tanquam in unam arborem plura genera, sic in istam domum multorum insitam atque illuminatam sapientiam*. Mr. Addison, likewise, has fallen into an error of the same sort, where he observes, 'There is not a single view of human nature, which is not sufficient to extinguish the seeds of pride.' In this passage he evidently unites images together, which have no connection with each other. When a seed has lost its power of vegetation, I might in a metaphorical sense say it is *extinguished*; but when in the same sense I call that disposition of the heart which produces pride the *seed* of that passion, I cannot, without introducing a confusion of ideas, apply any word to *seed* but what corresponds with its real properties or circumstances.

Another mistake in the use of this figure is, when different images are crowded too close upon each other, or (to express myself after Quintilian) when a sentence sets out with storms and tempests, and ends with fire and flames. A judicious reader will observe an impropriety

piety of this kind in one of the late essays of the inimitable author last quoted, where he tells us, That women were formed to temper mankind, not to set an *edge* upon their minds, and blow up in them those passions which are too apt to rise of their own accord. Thus a celebrated orator, speaking of that little blackening spirit in mankind, which is fond of discovering spots in the brightest characters, remarks, that when persons of this cast of temper have mentioned any virtue in their neighbour, It is well, if, to balance the matter, they do not clap some fault into the opposite scale, that *so the enemy may not go off with flying colours.* Dr. Swift also, whose style is the most pure and simple of any of our classic writers, and who does not seem in general very fond of the figurative manner, is not always free from censure in his management of the metaphorical language. In his essay on the Dissensions of Athens and Rome, speaking of the populace, he takes notice, That though in their corrupt notions of divine worship they are apt to multiply their gods, yet their earthly devotion is seldom paid to above one *idol* at a time, whose *ear* they pull with less murmuring, and much more skill, than when they share the *lading*, or even hold the *helm*. The most injudicious writer could not possibly have fallen into a more absurd inconsistency of metaphor, than this eminent wit has inadvertently been betrayed into, in this passage. For what connection is there between worshipping and *rowing*, and who ever heard before of pulling the *oar* of an idol?

As there are certain metaphors which are common to all languages; there are others of so delicate a nature, as not to bear transplanting from one nation into

another. There is no part, therefore, of the business of a translator more difficult to manage than this figure, as it requires great judgment to distinguish when it may, and may not, be naturalized with propriety and elegance. The want of this necessary discernment has led the common race of translators into great absurdities, and is one of the principal reasons that performances of this kind are generally so insipid. What strange work, for instance, would an injudicious interpreter make with the following metaphor in Homer?

Νῦν γὰρ νεκρῶσιν ἐνὶ Σύρῳ ἵσταται ἄνθρωποι.

Il. x. 173.

But Mr. Pope, by artfully dropping the particular image, yet retaining the general idea, has happily preserved the spirit of his author, and at the same time humoured the different taste of his own countrymen:

Each single Greek, in this conclusive strife,
Stands on the *sharpest* edge of death or life.

And now, Orontes, do you not think it high time to be dismissed from this fairy land? Permit me, however, just to add, that this figure, which casts so much light and beauty upon works of genius, ought to be entirely banished from the severer compositions of philosophy. It is the business of the latter to separate resemblances, not to find them, and to deliver her discoveries in the plainest and most unornamented expressions. Much dispute, and, perhaps, many errors, might have been avoided, if metaphor had been thus confined within its proper limits, and never wandered from the regions of eloquence and poetry. I am, &c.

LETTER XXV.

TO PHILOTES.

AUGUST 5, 1744

DON'T you begin to think that I will deserve the prescription you sent me, since I have scarce had the manners even to thank you for it? It must be confessed I have neglected to honour my physician with the honour due unto him; that is, I have omitted not only what I ought to have performed in good-breeding, but what I am ex-

pressly enjoined by my Bible. I am not, however, entirely without excuse; a silly one, I own; nevertheless, it is the truth. I have lately been a good deal out of spirits. But at length the fit is over. Amongst the number of those things which are wanting to secure me from a return of it, I must always reckon the company of my friend. I have,

have, indeed, frequent occasion for you; not in the way of your profession, but in a better: in the way of friendship. There is a healing quality in that intercourse, which a certain author has, with infinite propriety, termed *the medicine of life*. It is a medicine, which unluckily lies almost wholly out of my reach; fortune having separated me from those few friends whom I pretend or desire to claim. General acquaintances, you know, I am not much inclined to cultivate; so that I am at present as much secluded from society as if I were a *sojourner in a strange land*. Though re-

tirement is my dear delight, yet, upon some occasions, I think I have too much of it; and I agree with Balzac, *que la solitude est certainement une belle chose: mais il y a plaisir d'avoir quelqu'un qui sache répondre; à qui on puisse dire de tems en tems, que la solitude est une belle chose*. But I must not forget, that as I sometimes want company, you may as often wish to be alone; and that I may, perhaps, be at this instant breaking in upon one of those hours which you desire to enjoy without interruption. I will only detain you, therefore, whilst I add, that I am, &c.

LETTER XXVI.

TO PHIDIPPUS.

MAY 1, 1745.

IF that friend of yours, whom you are desirous to add to the number of mine, were endued with no other quality than the last you mentioned in the catalogue of his virtues, I should esteem his acquaintance as one of my most valuable privileges. When you assured me, therefore, of the generosity of his disposition, I wanted no additional motive to embrace your proposal of joining you and him at *. To say truth, I consider a generous mind as the noblest work of the creation, and am persuaded, wherever it resides, no real merit can be wanting. It is, perhaps, the most singular of all the moral endowments: I am sure, at least, it is often imputed where it cannot justly be claimed. The meanest self-love, under some refined disguise, frequently passes upon common observers for this god-like principle; and I have known many a popular action attributed to this motive when it flowed from no higher a source than the suggestions of concealed vanity. Good-nature, as it has many features in common with this virtue, is usually mistaken for it: the former, however, is but the effect, possibly, of a happy disposition of the animal structure, or, as Dryden somewhere calls it, of a certain 'milkeness of blood': whereas the latter is seated in the mind, and can never subsist where good sense and enlarged sentiments have no existence. It is entirely founded, indeed, upon justness of thought: which, perhaps, is the reason this virtue is so little the charac-

teristic of mankind in general. A man, whose mind is warped by the selfish passions, or contracted by the narrow prejudices of sects or parties, if he does not want honesty, must undoubtedly want understanding. The same clouds that darken his intellectual views, obstruct his moral ones; and his generosity is extremely circumscribed, because his reason is extremely limited.

It is the distinguishing pre-eminence of the Christian system, that it cherishes this elevated principle in one of its noblest exertions. Forgiveness of injuries, I confess indeed, has been inculcated by several of the heathen moralists; but it never entered into the established ordinances of any religion, till it had the sanction of the great Author of ours. I have often, however, wondered that the antients, who raised so many virtues and affections of the mind into divinities, should never have given a place in their temples to Generosity; unless, perhaps, they included it under the notion of FIDES or HONOS. But surely she might reasonably have claimed a separate altar, and superior rites. A principle of honour may restrain a man from counteracting the social ties, who yet has nothing of that active flame of generosity, which is too powerful to be confined within the humble boundaries of mere negative duties. True generosity rises above the ordinary rules of social conduct, and flows with much too full a stream to be comprehended within the precise marks of formal precepts. It is
a vigorous

a vigorous principle in the soul, which opens and expands all her virtues far beyond those which are only the forced and unnatural productions of a timid obedience. The man who is influenced singly by motives of the latter kind, aims no higher than at certain authoritative standards without ever attempting to reach those glorious elevations, which constitute the only true heroism of the social character. Religion, without this sovereign principle, degenerates into slavish fear, and wisdom into a specious cunning; learning is but the avarice of the mind, and wit it's more pleasing kind of madness. In a word, generosity sanctifies every passion, and adds grace to every acquisition of the

soul; and if it does not necessarily include, at least it reflects a lustre upon the whole circle of moral and intellectual qualities.

But I am running into a general panegyric upon generosity, when I only meant to acknowledge the particular instance you have given me of yours, in being desirous of communicating to me a treasure, which I know much better how to value than how to deserve. Be assured, therefore, though Euphronius had none of those polite accomplishments you enumerate, yet, after what you have informed me concerning his heart, I should esteem his friendship of more worth than all the learning of antient Greece, and all the *virtù* of modern Italy. I am, &c.

LETTER XXVII.

TO SAPPHO*.

MARCH 10, 1731.

WHILE yet no am'rous youths around thee bow,

Nor flatter'ing verse conveys the faithless vow;
To graver notes will Sappho's soul attend,
And ere she hears the lover, hear the friend.

Let maids less blest'd employ their meaner arts
To reign proud tyrants o'er unnumber'd hearts;

May Sappho learn (for nobler triumphs born)
Those little conquests of her sex to scorn.

To form thy bosom to each gen'rous deed;
To plant thy mind with ev'ry useful seed;
To plant thy mind with ev'ry useful seed;
Bethese thy arts; nor spare the grateful toil,
Where nature's hand has blest'd the happy soil.

So shalt thou know, with pleasing skill to blend

The lovely Mistress and instructive Friend:
So shalt thou know, when unrelenting Time
Shall spoil those charms yet op'ning to their prime,

To ease the loss of beauty's transient flow'r,
While reason keeps what rapture gave before.

And oh! whilst wit, fair dawning, spreads
it's ray,

Serenely rising to a glorious day,
To hail the growing lustre oft be mine,
Thou early fav'rite of the sacred Nine!

And shall the Muse with blameless boast
pretend,

In youth's gay bloom that Sappho call'd me
friend:

That urg'd by me she shunn'd the dang'rous
way,

Where heedless maids in endless error stray;
That scorn'ing soon her sex's idler art,
Fair praise inspir'd and virtue warm'd her
heart;

That fond to reach the distant paths of fame,
I taught her infant genius where to aim?
Thus when the feather'd choir first tempt the
sky,

And, all unskill'd, their feeble pinions try,
Th' experienc'd fire prescribes the advent'rous
height,

Guides the young wing, and pleas'd attends
the flight.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO PHIDIPPUS.

YES, Phidippus, I entirely agree
with you: the antients most cer-
tainly had much loftier notions of friend-

ship, than seem to be generally enter-
tained at present. But may they not
justly be considered on this subject, as

* A young lady of thirteen years of age,

downright

downright enthusiasts? Whilst, indeed, they talk of friendship as a virtue, or place it in a rank little inferior, I can admire the generous warmth of their sentiments; but when they go so far as to make it a serious question, whether Justice herself ought not in some particular cases to yield to this their supreme affection of the heart; there, I confess, they leave me far behind.

If we had not a treatise extant upon the subject, we should scarce believe this fact upon the credit of those authors who have delivered it down to us: but Cicero himself has ventured to take the affirmative side of this debate in his celebrated dialogue inscribed *Lælius*. He followed, it seems, in this notion, the sentiments of the Grecian Theophrastus, who publickly maintained the same astonishing theory.

It must be confessed, however, these admirers of the false sublime in Friendship talk upon this subject with so much caution, and in such general terms, that one is inclined to think they themselves a little suspected the validity of those very principles they would inculcate. We find, at least, a remarkable instance to that purpose, in a circumstance related of Chilo, one of those famous sages who are distinguished by the pompous title of the Wise Men of Greece.

That celebrated philosopher, being upon his death-bed, addressed himself, we are informed, to his friends who stood round him, to the following effect—
 'I cannot, through the course of a long life, look back with uneasiness upon any single instance of my conduct, unless, perhaps, on that which I am going to mention, wherein, I confess, I am still doubtful whether I acted as I ought or not. I was once appointed judge in conjunction with two others, when my particular friend was arraigned before us: were the laws to have taken their free course, he must inevitably have been condemned to die. After much debate therefore with myself, I resolved upon this expedient: I gave my own vote according to my conscience, but at the same time employed all my eloquence to prevail with my associates to absolve the criminal. Now I cannot but reflect upon this act with concern, as fearing there was something of per-

'sidy in persuading others to go counter to what I myself esteemed right.'

It does not, certainly, require any great depth of casuistry to pronounce upon a case of this nature. And yet, had Tully, that great master of reason, been Chilo's confessor upon this occasion, it is very plain he would have given him absolution, to the just scandal of the most ignorant curate that ever lulled a country village.

What I have here observed, will suggest, I if mistake not, a very clear answer to the question you propose.—Whence 'it should happen, that we meet with instances of friendship among the Greeks and Romans, far superior to any thing of the same kind which modern times have produced? For while the greatest geniuses among them employed their talents in exalting this noble affection, and it was encouraged even by the laws themselves; what effects might one not expect to arise from the concurrence of such powerful causes? The several examples of this kind which you have pointed out, are undoubtedly highly animating and singular; to which give me leave to add one instance no less remarkable, though, I think, not so commonly observed.

Eudamidas, the Corinthian, (says the story is related in Lucian's *Toxaris*) though in low circumstances himself, was happy in the friendship of two very wealthy persons, Charixenus and Aretheus. Eudamidas, finding himself, drawing near his end, made his will in the following terms: 'I leave my mother to Aretheus, to be maintained and protected by him in her old age. I bequeath to Charixenus the care of my daughter; desiring that he would see her disposed of in marriage, and portion her at the same time with as ample a fortune as his circumstances shall admit: and, in case of the death of either of these my two friends, I substitute the survivor in his place.

This will was looked upon by some (as we may well imagine) to be extremely ridiculous: however, the legatees received information of it with very different sentiments, accepting of their respective legacies with great satisfaction. It happened that Charixenus died a few days after his friend the testator; the survivorship therefore taking place in favour of Aretheus, he accordingly

not

not only took upon himself the care of his friend's mother, but also made an equal distribution of his estate between this child of Eudamidas, and an only daughter of his own, solemnizing both their marriages on the same day.

I do not recollect that any of the moderns have raised their notions of friendship to these extravagant heights, excepting only a very singular French author, who talks in a more romantic strain upon this subject than even the ancients themselves. Could you, Philippus, believe a man in earnest, who should assert that the secret one has sworn never to reveal, may without perjury be discovered to one's friend? Yet

the honest Montaigne has ventured gravely to advance this extraordinary doctrine in clear and positive terms. But I never knew a sensible man in my life, that was not an enthusiast upon some favourite point; as indeed there is none where it is more excusable than in the article of friendship. It is that which affords the most pleasing sunshine of our days; if therefore we see it now and then break out with a more than reasonable warmth and lustre, who is there that will not be inclined to pardon an excess, which can only flow from the most generous principles? Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE SAME.

JULY 3, 1746.

WHEN I mentioned *grace* as essential in constituting a fine writer, I rather hoped to have found my sentiments reflected back with a clearer light by yours, than imagined you would have called upon me to explain in form, what I only threw out by accident. To confess the truth, I know not whether, after all that can be said to illustrate this uncommon quality, it must not at last be resolved into the poet's *nequeo monstrare et sentio tantum*. In cases of this kind, where language does not supply us with proper words to express the notions of one's mind, we can only convey our sentiments in figurative terms: a defect which necessarily introduces some obscurity.

I will not, therefore, undertake to mark out with any sort of precision, that idea which I would express by the word *grace*: and, perhaps, it can no more be clearly described than justly defined. To give you, however, a general intimation of what I mean when I apply that term to compositions of genius, I would resemble it to that easy air, which so remarkably distinguishes certain persons of a genteel and liberal cast. It consists, not only in the particular beauty of single parts, but arises from the general symmetry and construction of the whole. An author may be just in his sentiments, lively in his figures, and clear in his expression; yet may have no claim to be admitted

into the rank of finished writers. Those several members must be so agreeably united as mutually to reflect beauty upon each other: their arrangement must be so happily disposed as not to admit of the least transposition without manifest prejudice to the entire piece. The thoughts, the metaphors, the allusions, and the diction, should appear easy and natural, and seem to arise like so many spontaneous productions, rather than as the effects of art or labour.

Whatever, therefore, is forced, or affected in the sentiments; whatever is pompous or pedantic in the expression, is the very reverse of *grace*. Her mien is neither that of a prude nor a coquet; she is regular without formality, and sprightly without being fantastical. Grace, in short, is to good writing, what a proper light is to a fine picture; it not only shews all the figures in their several proportions and relations, but shews them in the most advantageous manner.

As gentility (to resume my former illustration) appears in the minutest action, and improves the most inconsiderable gesture; so *grace* is discovered in the placing even of a single word, or the turn of a mere expletive. Neither is this inexpressible quality confined to one species of composition only, but extends to all the various kinds; to the humble pastoral as well as to the lofty

F Epic;

Epic; from the slightest letter to the most solemn manner.

I know not whether Sir William Temple may not be considered as the first of our prose authors who introduced a graceful *manner* into our language. At least that quality does not seem to have appeared early, or spread far, amongst us. But wheresoever we may look for it's origin, it is certainly to be found in it's highest perfection in the essays of a gentleman whose writings will be distinguished so long as politeness and good-sense have any admirers.

That becoming air which Tully esteemed the criterion of fine composition, and which every reader, he says, imagines so easy to be imitated, yet will find so difficult to attain, is the prevailing characteristic of all that excellent author's most elegant performances. In a word, one may justly apply to him what Plato, in his allegorical language, says of Aristophanes; that the *Graces* having searched all the world round for a temple wherein they might for ever dwell, settled at last in the breast of Mr. Addison. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XXX.

TO CLYTANDER.

CAN it then be true, Clytander, that after all the fine things which have been said concerning the love of our country, it owes it's rise to the principles you mention, and was originally propagated among mankind in order to cheat them into the service of the community? And is it thus, at last, that the most generous of the human passions, instead of bearing the sacred signature of nature, can produce no higher marks of it's legitimacy than the suspicious impress of art? The question is worth, at least, a few thoughts; and I will just run over the principal objections in your letter, without drawing them up, however, in a regular form.

That the true happiness of the individual cannot arise from the single exercise of the mere selfish principles, is evident, I think, above all reasonable contradiction. If a man would thoroughly enjoy his own being, he must of necessity look beyond it; his private satisfactions always increasing in the same proportion with which he promotes those of others. Thus self-interest, if rightly directed, flows through the nearer charities of relations, friends, and dependents, till it rises and dilates itself into general benevolence. But if every addition which we make to the welfare of others, be really an advancement of our own; the love of our country must necessarily, upon a principle of self-interest, be a passion founded in the strictest reason: because it is a disposition pregnant with the greatest pos-

sible good which the limited powers of man are capable of producing. Benevolence, therefore, points to our country, as to her only adequate mark: whatever falls short of that glorious end, is too small for her full gratification; and all beyond is too immense for her grasp.

Thus our country appears to have a claim to our affection, as it has a correspondent passion in the human breast: a passion, not raised by the artifices of policy, or propagated by the infection of enthusiasm, but necessarily resulting from the original constitution of our species, and conducive to the highest *private* advantage of each individual. When Curtius, therefore, or the two Decii, sacrificed their lives, in order to rescue their community from the calamities with which it was threatened; they were by no means impelled (as you seemed to represent them) by a political phrenzy, but acted on the most solid and rational principles. The method they pursued for that purpose, was dictated, I confess, by the most absurd and groundless superstition: yet while the impression of that national belief remained strong upon their minds, and they were thoroughly persuaded, that falling in the manner we are assured they did, was the only effectual means of preserving their country from ruin; they took the most rational measures of consulting their private happiness, by thus consenting to become the public victims. Could it even be admitted (what, with any degree of proba-

probability, never, indeed, can be admitted) that these glorious heroes considered fame as the vainest of shadows, and had no hopes of an after-life in any other scene of existence; still, however, their conduct might be justified as perfectly wise. For, surely, to a mind that was not wholly immersed in the lowest dregs of the most contracted selfishness; that had not totally extinguished every generous and social affection; the thoughts of having preferred a mere joyless existence (for such it must have been) to the supposed preservation of numbers of one's fellow-creatures, must have been far more painful than a thousand deaths.

I cannot, however, but agree with you, that this affection was productive of infinite mischief to mankind, as it broke out among the Romans, in the impious spirit of their unjust conquests. But it should be remembered, at the same time, that it is the usual artifice of ambition, to mask herself in the semblance of patriotism. And it can be no just objection to the noblest of the social passions, that it is capable of being inflamed beyond it's natural heat, and turned, by the arts of policy, to promote those destructive purposes, which it was originally implanted to prevent.

This zeal for our country may, indeed, become irrational, not only when it thus pushes us on to act counter to the natural rights of any other community; but likewise when it impels us to take the measures of violence in opposition to the general sense of our own. For may not public happiness be estimated by the same standard as that of private? and as every man's own opinion must determine his particular satisfaction, shall not the general opinion be consi-

dered as decisive in the question concerning general interest? Far am I, however, from insinuating that the true welfare of mankind in their collective capacities depends singly upon a prevailing fancy, any more than it does in their separate: undoubtedly in both instances they may equally embrace a false interest. But whenever this is the case, I should hardly imagine that the love of our country, on the one hand, or of our neighbour, on the other, would justify any methods of bringing them to a wiser choice, than those of calm and rational persuasion.

I cannot at present recollect which of the ancient authors it is, that mentions the Cappadocians to have been so enamoured of subjection to a despotic power, as to refuse the enjoyment of their liberties, though generously tendered to them by the Romans. Scarcely, I suppose, can there be an instance produced of a more remarkable depravity of national taste, and of a more false calculation of public welfare: yet even in this instance it should seem the highest injustice to have attempted by force, and at the expence, perhaps, of half the lives in the state, the introduction of a more improved system of government.

In this notion I am not singular, but have the authority of Plato himself on my side, who held it as a maxim of undoubted truth in politics, that the prevailing sentiments of a state, how much soever mistaken, ought by no means to be opposed by the measures of violence: a maxim, which if certain pretended or misguided patriots had happily embraced, much effusion of civil blood had been lately spared to our nation. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

TO PALAMEDES.

NOVEMBER 4, 1740.

*THE dawn is overcast, the morning
lours,
And heavily with clouds brings on the day.*

How then can I better disappoint the
loomy effects of a lowering sky, than
by calling my thoughts off from the dull

scene before me, and placing them upon
an object which I always consider with
pleasure? Much, certainly, are we in-
debted to that happy faculty, by which,
with a sort of magic power, we can
bring before one's mind whatever has
been the subject of it's most agreeable

F 2

con-

contemplation. In vain, therefore, would that lovely dame, who has so often been the topic of our conversations, pretend to enjoy you to herself: in spite of your favourite philosophy, or even of a more powerful divinity; in spite of Fortune herself, I can place you in my view, though half a century of miles lies between us. But am I for ever to be indebted to imagination only for your presence? and will you not sometimes let me owe that pleasure to yourself?

Surely you might spare me a few weeks before the summer ends, without any inconvenience to that noble plan upon which I know you are so intent. As for my own studies, they go on but slowly: I am, like a traveller without a guide in an unknown country, obliged to enquire the way at every turning, and consequently cannot advance with all the expedition I could wish. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

TO THE SAME.

AUGUST 10, 1745.

FORGIVE me, Palamedes, if I mistrust an art, which the greatest of philosophers has called the art of deceiving, and by which the first of orators could persuade the people that he had conquered at the athletic games, though they saw him fall at his adversary's feet. The voice of Eloquence should ever, indeed, be heard with caution; and she, whose boast it has formerly been, to make little things appear considerable, may diminish objects, perhaps, as well as enlarge them, and lessen even the charms of repose. But I have too long experienced the joys of retirement, to quit her arms for a more lively mistress; and I can look upon ambition, though adorned in all the ornaments of your oratory, with the cool indifference of the most confirmed Stoic. To confess the whole truth, I am too proud to endure a repulse, and too humble to hope for success: qualities little favourable, I imagine, to the pretensions of him who would claim the glittering prizes which animate those that run the race of ambition. Let those honours, then, you mention, be inscribed on the tombs of others; be it rather told on mine, that I lived and died

Unplac'd, unpension'd, no man's heir or slave.

And is not this a privilege as valuable as any of those which you have painted to my view, in all the warmest colours of your enlivening eloquence? Bruyere, at least, has just now assured me, That

to pay one's court to, no man, nor expect any to pay court to you, is the most agreeable of all situations; 'it is the 'true golden age,' says he, 'and the 'most natural state of man.'

Believe me, however, I am not in the mistake of those whom you justly condemn, as imagining that wisdom is the companion only of retirement, and that virtue enters not the more open and conspicuous walks of life: but I will confess at the same time, that though it is to Tully I give my applause, it is Atticus that has my affection.

'Life,' says a celebrated antient, 'may be compared to the Olympic games: some enter into those assemblies for glory, and others for gain; while there is a third party (and those by no means the most contemptible) who chuse to be merely spectators.' I need not tell you, Palamedes, how early it was my inclination to be numbered with the last; and as Nature has not formed me with powers, am I not obliged to her for having divested me of every inclination for bearing a part in the ambitious contentions of the world? Providence, indeed, seems to have designed some tempers for the obscure scenes of life; as there are some plants which flourish best in the shade. But the lowest shrub has its use, you are sensible, as well as the loftiest oak; and, perhaps, your friend may find some method of convincing you, that even the humblest talents are not given in vain. Farewel. I am, &c.

LET.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO PALEMON.

MAY 28, 1748.

IS it possible you can thus descend from the highest concerns to the lowest, and, after deliberating upon the affairs of Europe, have the humility to enquire into mine? But the greatest statesmen, it seems, have their trifling as well as their serious hours; and I have read of a Roman consul that amused himself with gathering cockle-shells, and of a Spartan monarch who was found riding upon a hobby-horse. Or shall I rather say, that friendship gilds every object upon which she shines? as it is the singular character of Palemon to preserve that generous flame in all its strength and lustre amidst that ambitious atmosphere which is generally esteemed so unfavourable to every brighter affection.

It is upon one or other of those principles alone, that you can be willing to suspend your own more important engagements, by attending to an account of mine. They have lately, indeed, been more diversified than usual, and I have passed these three months in a continual succession of new scenes. The most agreeable, as well as the farthest part of my progress, was to the seat of Hortensius; and I am persuaded you will not think my travels have been in vain, since they afford me an opportunity of informing you, that our friend is in possession of all that happiness which I am sure you wish him. It is probable, however, you have not yet heard that he owes the chief part of it to female merit; for his marriage was concluded even before those friends, who are most frequently with him, had the least suspicion of his intentions. But though he had some reasons for concealing his designs, he has none for being ashamed of them now they are executed. I say not this from any hasty approbation, but as having long known and esteemed the lady whom he has chosen: and as there is a pleasure in bringing two persons of merit to the knowledge of each other, will you allow me, in the remainder of this letter, to introduce her to your acquaintance?

Hortensia is of a good stature, and perfectly well proportioned; but one cannot so properly say her air is genteel, as that it is pleasing: for there is a certain unaffected carelessness in her dress and mien, that wins by degrees rather than strikes at first sight. If you were to look no farther than the upper part of her face, you would think her handsome; were you only to examine the lower, you would immediately pronounce the reverse; yet there is something in her eyes, which, without any pretence to be called fine, gives such an agreeable liveliness to her whole countenance, that you scarce observe, or soon forget, all her features are not regular. Her conversation is rather cheerful than gay, and more instructive than sprightly. But the principal and most distinguished faculties of her mind are her memory and her judgment, both which she possesses in a far higher degree than one usually finds even in persons of our sex. She has read most of the capital authors both in French and English; but her chief and favourite companions of that kind have lain among the historical and dramatic writers. There is hardly a remarkable event in ancient or modern story, of which she cannot give a very clear and judicious account; as she is equally well versed in all the principal characters and incidents of the most approved stage-compositions. The mathematics is not wholly a stranger to her; and though she did not think proper to pursue her inquiries of that kind to any great length, yet the very uncommon facility with which she entered into the reasonings of that science, plainly discovered she was capable of attaining a thorough knowledge of all its most abstruse branches. Her taste in performances of polite literature is always just; and she is an excellent critic, without knowing anything of the artificial rules of that science. Her observations, therefore, upon subjects of that sort, are so much the more to be relied upon, as they are the pure and unbiassed dictates of nature and good-sense.

sense. Accordingly, Hortensius, in the several pieces which, you known, he has published, constantly had recourse to her judgment; and I have often heard him upon those occasions apply, with singular pleasure, and with equal truth, what the tender Propertius says of his favourite Cynthia—

*Mæ juvat in gremia doctæ legisse puellæ,
Auribus et puris scripta probasse mea:
Hæc ubi contigerint, populi confusa vocato
Fabula; nam, dominâ judice, tutus ero.*

But her uncommon strength of understanding has preserved her from that fatal rock of all female knowledge, the impertinent ostentation of it: and she thinks a reserve in this article an essential part of that modesty which is the ornament of her sex. I have heard her observe, that it is not in the acquired endowments of the female mind, as in the beauties of her person, where it may be sufficient praise, perhaps, to follow the example of the virgin described by Tasso, who

Non copre sue bellezze, e non l'espone.

On the contrary, she esteems it a point of decency to throw a veil over the superior charms of her understanding; and if ever she draws it aside, you plainly perceive it is rather to gratify her good-nature than her vanity; less in compliance with her own inclinations, than with those of her company.

Her refined sense and extensive knowledge have not, however, raised her above the more necessary acquisitions of female science: they have only taught her to fill that part of her character with

higher grace and dignity. She enters into all the domestic duties of her station with the most consummate skill and prudence. Her economical deportment is calm and steady; and she presides over her family like the Intelligence of some planetary orb, conducting it in all its proper directions without violence or disturbed efforts.

These qualities, however considerable they might appear in a less shining character, are but under parts in Hortensia's: for it is from the virtues of her heart that she derives her most irresistible claim to esteem and approbation. A constant flow of uniform and unaffected cheerfulness gladdens her own breast, and enlivens that of every creature around her. Her behaviour under the injuries she has received (for injuries even the blameless Hortensia has received) was with all the calm fortitude of the most heroic patience; as she firmly relied, that Providence would either put an end to her misfortunes, or support her under them. And with that elevated hope she seemed to feel less for herself, than for the unjust and inhuman author of her sufferings, generously lamenting to see one, so nearly related to her, stand condemned by that severest and most significant of sentences, the united reproaches of the world and of his conscience.

Thus, Palemon, I have given you a faithful copy of an excellent original: but whether you will join with me in thinking my pencil has been true to its subject, must be left to some future opportunity to determine. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO HORTENSIVS.

DECEMBER 10, 1730.

I Have read over the treatise you recommended to me, with attention and concern. I was sorry to find an author, who seems so well qualified to serve the cause of truth, employing his talents in favour of what appears to me a most dangerous error. I have often wondered, indeed, at the policy of certain philosophers of this cast, who endeavour to advance religion by depreciating human nature. Methinks it would be

more for the interest of virtue, to represent her congenial (as congenial she surely is) with our make, and agreeable to our untainted constitution of soul; to prove that every deviation from moral rectitude is an opposition to our native bias, and contrary to those characters of dignity which the Creator has universally impressed upon the mind. This, at least, was the principle which many of the antient philosophers laboured to en-
culcate;

culate; as there is not, perhaps, any single topic in ethics that might be urged with more truth or greater efficacy.

It is upon this generous and exalted notion of our species, that one of the noblest precepts of the excellent Pythagoras is founded: Πάντα σε μέλει (says that philosopher) πάντα σε μέλει. The first and leading disposition to engage us on the side of virtue was, in that sage's estimation, to preserve above all things a constant reverence to our own mind, and to dread nothing so much as to offend against its native dignity. The ingenious Mr. Norris, I remember, recommends this precept as one of the best, perhaps, that was ever given to the world. May one not justly then be surprised to find it so seldom enforced in our modern systems of morality? To confess the truth, I am strongly inclined to suspect,

that much of that general contempt of every manly principle, which so remarkably distinguishes the present times, may fairly be attributed to the humour of discarding this animating notion of our kind. It has been the fashion to paint human nature in the harshest and most unpleasing colours. Yet there is not, surely, any argument more likely to induce a man to act unworthily, than to persuade him that he has nothing of innate worthiness in his genuine disposition; than to reason him out of every elevated notion of his own grandeur of soul; and to destroy, in short, every motive that might justly inspire him with a principle of self-reverence; that surest *internal* guard Heaven seems to have assigned to the human virtues. Farewel. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

TO CLEORA.

THOUGH it was not possible for me to celebrate with you, as usual, that happy anniversary which we have so many reasons to commemorate; yet I could not suffer so joyful a festival to pass by me without a thousand tender reflections. I took pleasure in tracing back that stream to its rise, which has coloured all my succeeding days with happiness; as my Cleora, perhaps, was at that very instant running over in her own mind those many moments of calm satisfaction which she has derived from the same source.

My heart was so entirely possessed with the sentiments which this occasion suggested, that I found myself raised into a sort of poetical enthusiasm; and I could not forbear expressing in verse, what I have often said in prose of the dear author of my most valuable enjoyments. As I imagined Teraminta would by this time be with you, I had a view to her harpichord in the composition; and I desire you would let her know I hope she will shew me, at my return, to what advantage the most ordinary numbers will appear, when judiciously accompanied with a fine voice and instrument.

I must not forget to tell you, it was

in your favourite grove, which we have so often traversed together, that I indulged myself in these pleasing reveries; as it was not, you are to suppose, without having first invoked the Genius of the place, and called upon the Muses in due form, that I broke out in the following rhapsody.

ODE FOR MUSIC.

AIR I.

THRICE has the circling earth, swift-
pacing, run,
And thrice again, around the sun,
Since first the white-rob'd priest, with sacred
band,
Sweet union! join'd us hand in hand.

CHORUS.

All Heav'n, and ev'ry friendly pow'r
Approv'd the vow, and bless'd the hour.

RECITATIVE.

What tho' in silence sacred Hymen wrod,
Nor lyre proclaim'd, nor garland crown'd the
God:

What tho' nor feast nor revel dance was there,
(Vain pomp of joy the happy well may spare!)
Yet Love unfeign'd, and conscious Honour
led

The spotless virgin to the bridal bed?
Rich tho' despoil'd of all her little store;
For who shall seize fair virtue's better dow'r?

AIR

AIR II.

Blest with sense, with temper blest,
Wisdom o'er thy lips presides;
Virtue guards thy generous breast,
Kindness all thy actions guides.

AIR III.

Ev'ry home-felt bliss is mine,
Ev'ry matron-grace is thine;
Chaste deportment, artless mien,
Converse sweet, and heart serene.

Sinks my soul with gloomy pain?
See, she smiles!—'tis joy again:
Swells a passion in my breast?
Hark, she speaks! and all is rest.

Oft as clouds my paths o'erspread,
(Doubtful where my steps should tread)
She, with judgment's steady ray,
Marks, and smooths the better way.

CHORUS.

Chief amongst ten thousand she,
Worthy, sacred Hymen! thee.

While such are the sentiments which I entertain of my Cleora, can I find myself obliged to be thus distant from her, without the highest regret? The truth, believe me, is, though both the company and the scene wherein I am engaged are extremely agreeable, yet I find a vacancy in my happiness, which none but you can fill up. Surely those who have recommended these little separations as necessary to revive the languor of the married state, have ill understood it's

most refined gratifications: there is no satiety in the mutual exchange of tender offices.

There seems to have been a time, when a happiness of this kind was considered as the highest glory, as well as the supreme blessing of human life. I remember, when I was in Italy, to have seen several conjugal inscriptions upon the sepulchral monuments of ancient Rome, which, instead of running out into a pompous panegyric upon the virtues of the deceased, mentioned singly, as the most significant of encomiums, how many years the parties had lived together in full and uninterrupted harmony. The Romans, indeed, in this, as in many other instances, afford the most remarkable examples; and it is an observation of one of their writers, that, notwithstanding divorces might very easily be obtained among them, their republic had subsisted many centuries before there was a single instance of that privilege ever having been exerted. Thus, my Cleora, you see, however unfashionable I may appear in the present generation, I might have been kept in countenance in a former, and by those too, who had as much true gallantry and good-sense as one usually meets with in this.—But affections which are founded in truth and nature stand not in need of any precedent to support them; and I esteem it my honour no less than my happiness, that I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO CLYTANDER.

DID you imagine I was really in earnest when I talked of quitting ***, and withdrawing from those gilded prospects which ambition had once so strongly set in my view? But my vows, you see, are not in the number of those which are made to be broken: for the retreat I had long meditated, is now, at last, happily executed. To say truth, my friend, the longer I lived in the high scenes of action, the more I was convinced that nature had not formed me for bearing a part in them: and though I was once so unexperienced in the ways of the world as to believe I had talents, as I was sure I had inclination, to serve my country, yet every day's conversation

contributed to wean me by degrees from that flattering delusion.

How indeed could a man hope to render himself acceptable to the various parties which divide our nation, who professes it as his principle, that there is no striking wholly into the measures of any, without renouncing either one's sense or one's integrity? and yet, as the world is at present constituted, it is scarce possible, I fear, to do any good in one's generation, (in public life I mean) without lifting under some or other of those various banners, which distinguish the several corps in these our political warfares. To those, therefore, who may have curiosity, enough to enter
into

into my concerns, and ask a reason for my quitting the town, I answer, in the words of the historian, *Civitatis morum tædet pigetque*. But I am wandering from the purpose of my letter, which was not so much to justify my retreat, as to incline you to follow me into it: to follow me, I mean, as a visitor only; for I love my country too well to call you off from those great services you are capable of doing her.

I have pitched my tent upon a spot which I am persuaded will not displease you. My villa (if you will allow me to call by that fine name, what, in truth, is no better than a neat farm-house) is situated upon a gentle rise, which commands a short, though agreeable view of about three miles in circumference. This is bounded on the north by a ridge of hills, which afford me at once both a secure shelter and a beautiful prospect: for they are as well cultivated as the most fertile valleys. In the front of my house, which stands south-east, I have a view of the river that runs, at the distance of somewhat less than a quarter of a mile, at the end of my grounds; and after making several windings and returns, seems to lose itself at the foot of those hills I just now mentioned. As for my garden, I am obliged to nature for its chief beauties; having no other (except a small spot which I have allotted for the purposes of my table) but what the fields and meadows afford. These, however, I have embellished with some care, having inter-

mixed among the hedges all the several sorts of flowering shrubs.

But I must not forget to mention what I look upon to be the principal ornament of the place; as indeed I do not recollect to have seen any thing of the kind in our English plantations. I have covered a small spot with different sorts of ever-greens, many of which are of a species not very usual in our country. This little plantation I have branched out into various labyrinth-walks, which are all terminated by a small temple in the centre. I have a double advantage from this artificial wood: for it not only affords me a very shady retreat in summer, but, as it is situated opposite to my library, supplies me in winter with a perspective of the most agreeable verdure imaginable.

What heightens my relish of this retirement, is the company of my Cleora; as indeed many of the best improvements I have made in it, are owing to hints which I have received from her exquisite taste and judgment. She will rejoice to receive you as her guest here; and has given it me in charge to remind you, that you have promised to be so. As the business of parliament is now drawing to a conclusion, I may urge this to you without any imputation upon my patriotism; though at the same time, I must add, I make a very considerable sacrifice of private interest whenever I resign you for the sake of the public. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO HORTENSIVS.

ARE you aware, Hortensius, how far I may mislead you, when you are willing to resign yourself to my guidance, through the regions of criticism? Remember, however, that I take the lead in these paths, not in confidence of my own superior knowledge of them, but in compliance with a request, which I never yet knew how to refuse. In short, Hortensius, I give you my sentiments, because it is my sentiments you require: but I give them at the same time rather as doubts than decisions.

After having thus acknowledged my

insufficiency for the office you have assigned me, I will venture to confess that the poet who has gained over your approbation, has been far less successful with mine. I have ever thought, with a very celebrated modern writer, that

*Le vers le mieux rempli, la plus noble pensée,
Ne peut plaire à l'esprit quand l'oreille est
blessée.* BOILEAU,

Thus, though I admit there is both wit in the raillery, and strength in the sentiments of your friend's moral epistle, it by no means falls in with those notions I have formed to myself con-

G concerning

cerning the essential requisites in compositions of this kind. He seems, indeed, to have widely deviated from the model he professes to have had in view, and is no more like Horace, than *Hyperion to a Satire*. His deficiency in point of versification, not to mention his want of elegance in the general manner of his poem, is sufficient to destroy the pretended resemblance. Nothing, in truth, can be more absurd, than to write in poetical measure, and yet neglect harmony; as of all the kinds of false style, that which is neither prose nor verse, but I know not what inartificial combination of powerless words bordered with rhyme, is far, surely, the most insufferable.

But you are of opinion, I perceive, and it is an opinion in which you are not singular) that a negligence of this kind may be justified by the authority of the Roman satirist: yet surely those who entertain that notion, have not thoroughly attended either to the precepts or the practice of Horace. He has attributed, I confess, his satirical composition to the inspiration of a certain Muse, whom he distinguishes by the title of the *Musa pedestris*: and it is this expression which seems to have misled the generality of his imitators. But though he will not allow her to fly, he by no means intends she should creep; on the contrary, it may be said of the Muse of Horace, as of the Eve of Milton, that

Grace is in all her steps.

That this was the idea which Horace himself had of her, is evident, not only from the general air which prevails in his Satires and Epistles, but from several express declarations which he lets fall in his progress through them. Even when he speaks of her in his greatest fits of modesty, and describes her as exhibited in his own moral writings, he particularly insists upon the ease and harmony of her motions. Though he humbly disclaims, indeed, all pretensions to the higher poetry, the *acer spiritus et vis*, as he calls it; he represents his style as being governed by the *tempora certa modoque*, as flowing with a certain regular and agreeable cadence. Accordingly, we find him particularly condemning his predecessor Lucilius for the dissonance of his numbers; and he professes to have made the experiment,

whether the same kind of moral subjects might not be treated in more soft and easy measures:

*Quid vetat et nosmet Lucili scripta legentes,
Quærere num illius, num rerum dura negarit
Versiculos natura magis falsos et cunctos
Mollius?*

The truth is, a tuneful cadence is the single prerogative of poetry which he pretends to claim to his writings of this kind: and so far is he from thinking it unessential, that he acknowledges it as the only separation which distinguishes them from prose. If that were once to be broken down, and the musical order of his words destroyed, there would not, he tells us, be the least appearance of poetry remaining:

*Non
Invenias etiam disjecti membra poetæ.*

However, when he delivers himself in this humble strain, he is not, you will observe, sketching out a plan of this species of poetry in general; but speaking merely of his own performances in particular. His demands rise much higher, when he informs us what he expects of those who would succeed in compositions of this moral kind. He then not only requires flowing numbers, but an expression concise and unincumbered; wit exerted with good breeding, and managed with reserve; as upon some occasions the sentiments may be enforced with all the strength of eloquence and poetry: and though in some parts the piece may appear with a more serious and solemn cast of colouring, yet upon the whole, he tells us, it must be lively and *riant*. This I take to be his meaning in the following passage:

*Est brevitate opus, ut currat sententia, neu se
Impediat verbis lassas onerantibus aures;
Et sermone opus est modo tristis, sæpe jocosus,
Descendente vicem modo rhetoris atque poetæ;
Interdum urbanus, parentis viribus atque
Extenuantis eas consilio.*

Such, then, was the notion which Horace had of this kind of writing. And if there is any propriety in these his rules, if they are founded on the truth of taste and art; I fear the performance in question, with numberless others of the same stamp, (which have not however wanted admirers) must inevitably stand condemned. The truth of it is, most of the pieces which are usually pro-

duced

duced upon this plan, rather give one an image of Lucilius, than of Horace: the authors of them seem to mistake the awkward negligence of the favourite of Scipio, for the easy air of the friend of Mæcenas.

You will still tell me, perhaps, that the example of Horace himself is an unanswerable objection to the notion I have embraced; as there are numberless lines in his Satires and Epistles where the versification is evidently neglected. But are you sure, Hortensius, that those lines which sound so unharmonious to a modern ear, had the same effect upon a Roman one? For myself, at least, I am much inclined to believe the contrary: and it seems highly incredible, that he who had ventured to censure Lucilius for the uncouthness of his numbers, should himself be notoriously guilty of the very fault against which he so strongly exclaims. Most certain it is, that the delicacy of the ancients with respect to numbers, was far superior to any thing that modern taste can pretend to; and that they discovered differences, which are to us absolutely imperceptible. To mention only one remarkable instance: A very ancient writer has observed upon the following verse in Virgil—

Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris—

that if instead of *primus* we were to pronounce it *primis* (is being long, and *us* short) the entire harmony of the line would be destroyed. But whose ear is now so exquisitely sensible, as to perceive the distinction between those two quantities? Some refinement of this kind might probably give music to those lines in Horace, which now seem so untunable.

In subjects of this nature it is not possible, perhaps, to express one's ideas in any very precise and determinate manner. I will only therefore in general observe with respect to the requisite style of these performances, that it consists in a natural ease of expression, an elegant familiarity of phrase, which though formed of the most usual terms of language, has yet a grace and energy no less striking than that of a more elevated diction. There is a certain lively colouring peculiar to compositions in this way, which, without being so bright and glowing as is neces-

sary for the higher poetry, is nevertheless equally removed from whatever appears harsh and dry. But particular instances will perhaps better illustrate my meaning, than any thing I can farther say to explain it. There is scarce a line in the Moral Epistles of Mr. Pope, which might not be produced for this purpose. I chuse, however, to lay before you the following verses, not as preferring them to many others which might be quoted from that inimitable satirist; but as they afford me an opportunity of comparing them with a version of the same original lines, of which they are an imitation; and, by that means, of shewing you at one view what I conceive is, and is not, in the true manner of Horace:

Peace is my dear delight — not Flcury's
more;

But touch me, and no minister so sore;
Whoe'er offends, at some unlucky time,
Slides into verse, and hitches in a rhyme;
Sav'd to ridicule his whole life long,
And the sad burden of some merry song.

I will refer you to your own memory for the Latin passage, from whence Mr. Pope has taken the general hint of these verses; and content myself with adding a translation of the lines from Horace by another hand:

Behold me blameless bard, how fond of
peace!

But he who hurts me (nay, I will be heard)
Had better take a lion by the beard;
His eyes shall weep the folly of his tongue,
By laughing crowds in rueful ballad song.

There is a strength and spirit in the former of these passages, and a flatness and languor in the latter, which cannot fail of being discovered by every reader of the least delicacy of discernment; and yet the words which compose them both, are equally sounding and significant. The rules then, which I just now mentioned from Horace, will point out the real cause of the different effects which these two passages produce in our minds; as the passages themselves will serve to confirm the truth and justice of the rules. In the lines from Mr. Pope, one of the principal beauties will be found to consist in the shortness of the expression: whereas the sentiments in the other are too much encumbered with words. Thus, for instance,

Peace is my dear delight,

is pleasing, because it is concise; as— Behold me blameless bard, how fond of peace! is, in comparison of the former, the *verba lassas onerantia curas*. Another distinguishing perfection in the imitator of Horace, in that spirit of gaiety which he has diffused through these lines, not to mention those happy, though familiar, images of *sliding* into verse, and *bitching* in a rhyme; which can never be sufficiently admired. But the translator, on the contrary, has cast too serious an air over his numbers, and appears with an emotion and earnestness that disappoints the force of his satire:

Nay, I will be heard,

has the mien of a man in a passion: and His eyes shall weep the folly of his tongue: though a good line in itself, is much too solemn and tragical for the undisturbed pleasantries of Horace.

But I need not enter more minutely into an examination of these passages. The general hints I have thrown out in this letter will suffice to shew you wherein I imagine the true manner of Horace consists. And after all, perhaps, it can no more be explained, than acquired, by rules of art. It is what true genius can only execute, and just taste alone discover. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

NOVEMBER 7, 1730.

YOUR admired poet, I remember, somewhere lays it down as a maxim, that

The proper study of mankind is man.

There cannot, indeed, be a more useful, nor, one should imagine, a more easy science: so many lessons of this kind are every moment forcing themselves upon our observation, that it should seem scarce possible not to be well acquainted with the various turns and dispositions of the human heart. And yet there are so few who are really adepts in this article, that to say of a man, *he knows the world*, is generally esteemed a compliment of the most significant kind.

The reason, perhaps, of the general ignorance which prevails in this sort of knowledge, may arise from our judging too much by universal principles. Whereas there is a wonderful disparity in mankind, and numberless characters exist which cannot properly be reduced to any regular and fixed standard. Monsieur Pafchal observes, that the greater sagacity any man possesses, the more originals he will discern among his species; as it is the remark of Sir William Temple, that no nation under the sun abounds with so many as our own. Plutarch, if I remember right, is of opinion, that there is a wider difference between the individuals of our own kind, than what is observable between crea-

tures of a separate order; while Montaigne (who seems to have known human nature perfectly well) supposes the distance to be still more remote, and asserts that the distinction is much greater between man and man, than between man and beast.

The comic writers have not, I think, taken all the advantage they might of this infinite diversity of humour in the human race. A judicious observer of the world might single out abundant materials for ridicule, without having recourse to those worn-out characters which are for ever returning upon the stage. If I were acquainted with any genius in this class of writers, I think I could furnish him with an original, which, if artfully represented and connected with proper incidents, might be very successfully introduced into comedy. The person I have in view is my neighbour Stilotes.

Stilotes in his youth was esteemed to have good sense and a tolerable taste for letters; as he gained some reputation at the university in the exercises usual at that place. But as soon as he was freed from the restraint of tutors, the natural restlessness of his temper broke out, and he has never, from that time to this, applied himself for half an hour together to any single pursuit. He is extremely active in his disposition; but his whole life is one incessant whirl of trifles. He rises, perhaps, with a full intent of amusing himself all the morning with his gun;

gun; but before he has got half the length of a field, he recollects that he owes a visit, which he must instantly pay: accordingly his horse is saddled, and he sets out. But in his way he remembers that he has not given proper orders about such a flower, and he must absolutely return, or the whole œconomy of his nursery will be ruined. Thus, in whatever action you find him engaged, you may be sure it is the very reverse of what he proposed. Yet with all this quickness of transition and vivacity of spirits, he is so indolent in every thing which has the air of business, that he is at least two or three months before he can persuade himself to open any letter he receives: and from the same disposition, he has suffered the dividends of his stocks to run on for many years without receiving a shilling of the interest. Stilotes is possessed of an estate in Dorsetshire, but that being the place where his chief business lies, he chuses constantly to reside with a friend near London. This person submits to his

humour and his company, in hopes that Stilotes will consider him in his will: but it is more than possible, that he will never endure the fatigue of signing one. However, having here every thing provided for him but clothes and pocket-money, he lives perfectly to his satisfaction, in full employment without any real business; and while those who look after his estate take care to supply him with sufficient to answer those two articles, he is entirely unconcerned as to all the rest: though, when he is disposed to appear more than ordinarily important, he will gravely harangue upon the roguery of stewards, and complain that his rents will scarce maintain him in powder and shot half the partridge seasons. In short, Stilotes is one of the most extraordinary compounds of indolence and activity that I ever met with; and as I know you have a taste for curiosities, I present you with his characters as a rarity that merits a place in your collection. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO PHIDIPPUS.

TIS well, my friend, that the age of transformation is no more: otherwise I should tremble for your severe attack upon the Muses, and expect to see the story of your metamorphosis embellish the poetical miracles of some modern Ovid. But it is long since the fate of the Piérides has gained any credit in the world, and you may now, in full security, condemn the divinities of Parnassus, and speak irreverently of the daughters of Jove himself. You see, nevertheless, how highly the antients conceived of them, when they thus represented them as the offspring of the great father of Gods and men. You reject, I know, this article of the heathen creed: but I may venture, however, to assert, that philosophy will confirm what fable has thus invented, and that the Muses are, in strict truth, of heavenly extraction.

The charms of the fine arts are, indeed, literally derived from the Author of all nature, and founded in the original frame and constitution of the human mind. Accordingly, the general prin-

ciples of *taste* are common to our whole species, and arise from that internal sense of beauty which every man, in some degree at least, evidently possesses. No rational mind can be so wholly void of all perceptions of this sort, as to be capable of contemplating the various objects that surround him with one equal coldness and indifference. There are certain forms which must necessarily fill the soul with agreeable ideas; and she is instantly determined in her approbation of them, previous to all reasonings concerning their use and convenience. It is upon these general principles, that what is called fine taste in the arts is founded; and consequently is by no means so precarious and unsettled an idea as you chuse to describe it. The truth is, taste is nothing more than this universal sense of beauty, rendered more exquisite by genius, and more correct by cultivation: and it is from the simple and original ideas of this sort, that the mind learns to form her judgment of the higher and more complex kinds. Accordingly, the whole circle of the imitative

tative and oratorical arts is governed by the same general rules of criticism; and to prove the certainty of these with respect to any one of them, is to establish their validity with regard to all the rest. I will therefore consider the criterion of taste in relation only to fine writing.

Each species of composition has its distinct perfections: and it would require a much larger compass than a letter affords, to prove their respective beauties to be derived from truth and nature; and consequently reducible to a regular and precise standard. I will only mention therefore those general properties which are essential to them all, and without which they must necessarily be defective in their several kinds. These, I think, may be comprehended under uniformity in the design, variety and resemblance in the metaphors and similitudes, together with propriety and harmony in the diction. Now some or all of these qualities constantly attend our ideas of beauty, and necessarily raise that agreeable perception of the mind, in what object soever they appear. The charms of fine composition then, are so far from existing only in the heated imagination of an enthusiastic admirer, that they result from the constitution of Nature herself. And perhaps the principles of criticism are as certain and indisputable, even as those of the mathematics. Thus, for instance, that order is preferable to confusion, that harmony is more pleasing than dissonance, with some few other axioms upon which the science is built; are truths which strike at once upon the mind with the same force of conviction, as that the whole is greater than any of its parts, or, that if from equals you take away equals, the remainder will be equal. And in both cases, the propositions which rest upon these plain and obvious maxims, seem equally capable of the same evidence of demonstration.

But as every intellectual as well as animal faculty is improved and strengthened by exercise, the more the soul exerts this her internal sense of beauty upon any particular object, the more she will enlarge and refine her relish of that peculiar species. For this reason the works of those great masters, whose performances have been long and generally admired, supply a farther criterion of fine taste, equally fixed and certain as that

which is immediately derived from Nature herself. The truth is, fine writing is only the art of raising agreeable sensations of the intellectual kind; and therefore, as by examining those original forms which are adapted to awaken this perception in the mind, we learn what those qualities are which constitute beauty in general; so by observing the peculiar construction of those compositions of genius which have always pleased, we perfect our idea of fine writing in particular. It is this united approbation, in persons of different ages and of various characters and languages, that Longinus has made the test of the true sublime; and he might with equal justice have extended the same criterion to all the inferior excellencies of elegant composition. Thus the deference paid to the performances of the great masters of antiquity, is fixed upon just and solid reasons: it is not because Aristotle and Horace have given us the rules of criticism, that we submit to their authority; it is because those rules are derived from works which have been distinguished by the uninterrupted admiration of all the more improved part of mankind from their earliest appearance down to this present hour. For whatever, through a long series of ages, has been universally esteemed as beautiful, cannot but be conformable to our just and natural ideas of beauty.

The opposition, however, which sometimes divides the opinions of those whose judgments may be supposed equal and perfect, is urged as a powerful objection against the reality of a fixed canon of criticism: it is a proof, you think, that after all which can be said of fine taste, it must ultimately be resolved into the peculiar relish of each individual. But this diversity of sentiments will not, of itself, destroy the evidence of the criterion; since the same effect may be produced by numberless other causes. A thousand accidental circumstances may concur in counteracting the force of the rule; even allowing it to be ever so fixed and invariable, when left in its free and uninfluenced state. Not to mention that false bias which party or personal dislike may fix upon the mind, the most unprejudiced critic will find it difficult to disengage himself entirely from those partial affections in favour of particular beauties, to which either the general course of his studies, or the peculiar

cast

cast of his temper, may have rendered him most sensible. But as perfection in any works of genius results from the united beauty and propriety of it's several distinct parts, and as it is impossible that any human composition should possess all those qualities in their highest and most sovereign degree; the mind, when she pronounces judgment upon any piece of this sort, is apt to decide of it's merit, as those circumstances which she most admires, either prevail or are deficient. Thus, for instance, the excellency of the Roman masters in painting, consists in beauty of design, nobleness of attitude, and delicacy of expression; but the charms of good colouring are wanting. On the contrary, the Venetian school is said to have neglected design a little too much; but at the same time has been more attentive to the grace and harmony of well-disposed lights and

shades. Now it will be admitted by all admirers of this noble art, that no composition of the pencil can be perfect, where either of these qualities are absent; yet the most accomplished judge may be so particularly struck with one or other of these excellencies, in preference to the rest, as to be influenced in his censure or applause of the whole tablature, by the predominancy or deficiency of his favourite beauty. Something of this kind (where the meaner prejudices do not operate) is ever, I am persuaded, the occasion of that diversity of sentences which we occasionally hear pronounced by the most improved judges, on the same piece. But this only shews, that much caution is necessary to give a fine taste it's full and unobstructed effect; not that it is in itself uncertain and precarious. I am, &c.

LETTER XL.

TO PALAMEDES.

YOUR resolution to decline those overtures of acquaintance which Mezentius, it seems, has lately made to you, is agreeable to the refined principles which have ever influenced your conduct. A man of your elegant notions of integrity will observe the same delicacy with respect to his companions, as Cæsar did with regard to his wife, and refuse all commerce with persons even but of suspected honour. It would not, indeed, be doing justice to Mezentius, to represent him in that number: for though his hypocrisy has preserved to him some few friends, and his immense wealth draws after him many followers, the world in general are by no means divided in their sentiments concerning him.

But, whilst you can have his picture from so many better hands, why are you desirous of seeing it by mine? It is a painful employment to contemplate human nature in it's deformities; as there is nothing, perhaps, more difficult than to execute a portrait of the characteristic kind with strength and spirit. However, since you have assigned me the task, I do not think myself at liberty to refuse it; especially as it is your interest to see him delineated in his true form.

Mezentius, with the designs and artifice of a Catiline, affects the integrity and patriotism of a Cato. Liberty, justice, and honour, are words which he knows perfectly well how to apply with address; and having them always ready upon proper occasions, he conceals the blackest purposes under the fairest appearances. For void, as in truth he is, of every worthy principle, he has too much policy not to pretend to the noblest; well knowing, that counterfeit virtues are the most successful vices. It is by arts of this kind, that, notwithstanding he has shewn himself unrestrained by the most sacred engagements of society; and uninfluenced by the most tender affections of nature, he has still been able to retain some degree of credit in the world: for he never sacrifices his honour to his interest, that he does not, in some less considerable, but more open instance, make a concession of his interest to his honour; and thus, while he sinks his character on one side, very artfully raises it on the other. Accordingly, under pretence of the most scrupulous delicacy of conscience, he lately resigned a post which he held under my Lord Godolphin; when at the same time he was endeavouring, by the most

most shameless artifices and evasions, to deceive and defraud a friend of mine in one of the most solemn and important transactions that can pass between man and man.

But will you not suspect that I am describing a phantom of my own imagination, when I tell you after this, that he has erected himself into a reformer of manners, and is so injudiciously officious as to draw the enquiry of the world upon his own morals by attempting to expose the defects of others. A man who ventures publicly to point out the

blemishes of his contemporaries, should at least be free from any uncommon stain himself, and have nothing remarkably dark in the complexion of his own private character. But Mezentius, not satisfied with being vitious, has at length determined to be ridiculous; and after having wretchedly squandered his youth and his patrimony in riot and dissoluteness, is contemptibly mispending his old age in measuring impotent syllables, and dealing out pointleis abuse. Farewel.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLI.

TO ORONTES.

MARCH 10, 1718.

WHAT haughty Sacharissa has put you out of humour with her whole sex? for it is some disappointment, I suspect, of the tender kind, that has thus sharpened the edge of your satire, and pointed it's invective against the fairer half of our species. You were not mistaken, however, when you supposed I should prove no convert to your doctrine; but rise up as an advocate, where I profess myself an admirer. I am not, 'tis true, altogether of old Montaigne's opinion, that the souls of both sexes *sont jettez*, as he expresses it, *en mesme moules*: on the contrary, I am willing enough to join with you in thinking, that they may be wrought on from different models. Yet the *casts* may be equally perfect, though it should be allowed that they are essentially different. Nature, it is certain, has traced out a separate course of action for the two sexes; and as they are appointed to distinct offices of life, it is not improbable that there may be something distinct likewise in the frame of their minds; that there may be a kind of sex in the very soul.

I cannot therefore but wonder, that Plato should have thought it reasonable to admit them into an equal share of the dignities and offices of his imaginary commonwealth; and that the wisdom of the antient Egyptians should have so strangely inverted the evident intentions of Providence, as to confine the men to domestic affairs, whilst the women, it is said, were engaged abroad in the active and laborious scenes of bu-

siness. History, it must be owned, will supply some few female instances of all the most masculine virtues: but appearances of that extraordinary kind are too uncommon to support the notion of a general equality in the natural powers of their minds.

Thus much, however, seems evident, that there are certain moral boundaries which nature has drawn between the two sexes, and that neither of them can pass over the limits of the other, without equally deviating from the beauty and decorum of their respective characters. Boadicea in armour is, to me at least, as extravagant a sight, as Achilles in petticoats.

In determining, therefore, the comparative merit of the two sexes, it is no derogation from female excellency, that it differs in kind from that which distinguishes the male part of our species. And if in general it shall be found (what, upon an impartial enquiry, I believe, will most certainly be found) that women fill up their appointed circle of action with greater regularity and dignity, than men; the claim of preference cannot justly be decided in our favour. In the prudential and oeconomical parts of life, I think it undeniable that they rise far above us. And if true fortitude of mind is best discovered by a cheerful resignation to the measures of Providence, we shall not find reason, perhaps, to claim that most singular of the human virtues as our peculiar privilege. There are numbers of the other sex, who, from the natural delicacy of their constitution,

tion, pass through one continued scene of suffering, from their cradles to their graves, with a firmness of resolution that would deserve so many statues to be erected to their memories, if heroism were not estimated more by the splendor than the merit of actions.

But whatever real difference there may be between the moral or intellectual powers of the male and female mind; nature does not seem to have marked the distinction so strongly as our vanity is willing to imagine: and after all, perhaps, education will be found to constitute the principal superiority. It must be acknowledged, at least, that in this article we have every advantage over the softer sex, that art and industry can possibly secure to us. The most animating examples of Greece and Rome are set before us, as early as we are capable of any observation; and the noblest compositions of the antients are given into our hands, almost as soon as we have strength to hold them: while the employments of the other sex, at the same period of life, are generally the reverse of every thing that can open and enlarge their minds, or fill them with just and rational notions. The truth of it is, female education is so much worse than none, as it is better to leave the mind to its natural and unfrustrated suggestions, than to lead it into false pursuits, and contract its views, by turning them upon the lowest and most trifling objects. We seem, indeed, by the manner in which we suffer the youth of that sex to be trained, to consider women agreeably to the opinion of certain Mahometan doctors, and treat them as if we believed they have no souls: why else are they

Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and trouble the tongue, and roll the
eye? MILT.

This strange neglect of cultivating the female mind, can hardly be allowed as

good policy, when it is considered how much the interest of society is concerned in the rectitude of their understandings. That season of every man's life which is most susceptible of the strongest impressions, is necessarily under female direction; as there are few instances, perhaps, in which that sex is not one of the select springs which regulates the most important movements of private or public transactions. What Cato observed of his countrymen, is in one respect true of every nation under the sun—'The Romans,' said he, 'govern the world, but it is the women that govern the Romans.' Let not, however, a certain pretended Cato of your acquaintance take occasion from this maxim to insult a second time that *innocence* he has so often injured: for I will tell him another maxim as true as the former, That there are *circumstances* where no woman has power enough to controul a man of spirit.

If it be true, then, (as true beyond all peradventure it is) that female influence is thus extensive, nothing, certainly, can be of more importance, than to give it a proper tendency, by the assistance of a well-directed education. Faram I from recommending any attempts to render women learned; yet surely it is necessary they should be raised above ignorance. Such a general tincture of the most useful science as may serve to free the mind from vulgar prejudices, and give it a relish for the rational exercise of its powers, might very justly enter into the plan of female erudition. That sex might be taught to turn the course of their reflections into a proper and advantageous channel, without any danger of rendering them too elevated for the feminine duties of life. In a word, I would have them considered as designed by Providence for use as well as show, and trained up not only as women, but as rational creatures. Adieu.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLII.

TO PALEMON.

MAY 5, 1746.

WHILST you are engaged in turning over the records of past ages, and tracing our constitution from its rise, through all its several periods;

I sometimes amuse myself with reviewing certain annals of an humbler kind, and considering the various turns and revolutions that have happened in the sentiments

ments and affections of those with whom I have been most connected. A history of this sort is not, indeed, so striking as that which exhibits kings and heroes to our view; but may it not be contemplated, Palemon, with more private advantage?

Methinks we should scarce be so im-bittered against those who differ from us in principle or practice, were we of-
tener to reflect how frequently we have varied from ourselves in both those arti-
cles. It was but yesterday that Lucius, whom I once knew a very zealous advo-
cate for the most controverted points of
faith, was arguing with equal warmth
and vehemence on the principles of
Deism; as Bathillus, who set out in the
world a cool infidel, has lately drawn
up one of the most plausible defences of
the mystic devotees, that, perhaps, was
ever written. The truth is, a man must
either have passed his whole life without
reflecting, or his thoughts must have
run in a very limited channel, who has
not often experienced many remarkable
revolutions of the mind.

The same kind of inconstancy is ob-
servable in our pursuits of happiness as
well as truth. Thus our friend Cusio,
whom we both remember in the former
part of his life, enamoured of every fair
face he met, and enjoying every woman

he could purchase, has at last collected
this diffusive flame into a single point, and
could not be tempted to commit an infi-
delity to his marriage vow, though a
form as beautiful as the Venus of Apel-
les was to court his embrace; whilst
Apemanthes, on the other hand, who
was the most sober and domestic man I
ever knew till he lost his wife, com-
menced a rake at five and forty, and is
now for ever in a tavern or a stew.

Who knows, Palemon, whether even
this humour of moralizing, which, as
you often tell me, so strongly marks my
character, may not wear out in time,
and be succeeded by a brighter and
more lively vein? Who knows but I may
court again the mistress I have forsaken,
and die at last in the arms of ambition?
Gleora, at least, who frequently rallies
me upon that fever of my youth, assures
me I am only in the intermission of a fit,
which will certainly return. But though
there may be some excuse, perhaps, in
exchanging our follies or our errors,
there can be none in resuming those we
have once happily quitted: for surely he
must be a very injudicious sportsman,
who can be tempted to beat over those
fields again which have ever disappoint-
ed him of his game. Farewel.

I am, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

JULY, 2, 1742.

IT is a pretty observation, which I
have somewhere met, that the most
pleasing of all harmony arises from the
censure of a single person, when mixed
with the general applauses of the world.
I almost suspect, therefore, that you are
considering the interest of your admired
author, when you call upon me for my
farther objections to his performance:
and are for joining me, perhaps, to the
number of those who advance his repu-
tation, by opposing it. The truth,
however, is, you could not have chosen
a critic (if a critic I might venture to
call myself) who has a higher esteem for
all the compositions of Mr. Pope: as
indeed I look upon every thing that
comes from his hands, with the same
degree of veneration as if it were con-
secrated by antiquity. Nevertheless,
though I greatly revere his judgment, I

cannot absolutely renounce my own:
and since some have been bold enough to
advance, that even the Sacred Writings
themselves do not always speak the lan-
guage of the Spirit; I may have leave to
suspect of the poets what has been as-
serted of the prophets, and suppose that
their pens are not, at all seasons, under
the guidance of inspiration. But as
there is something extremely ungrateful
to the mind, in dwelling upon those lit-
tle spots that necessarily attend the lus-
tre of all human merit; you must allow
me to join his beauties with his imper-
fections, and admire with rapture after
having condemned with regret.

There is a certain modern figure of
speech, which the authors of *The art of
inking in poetry* have called the *diminishing*.
This, so far as it relates to words
only, consists in debasing a great idea,
by

by expressing it in a term of meaner import: Mr. Pope has himself now and then fallen into this kind of the *profound*, which he has with such uncommon wit and spirit exposed in the writings of others. Thus Agamemnon, addressing himself to Menelaus and Ulysses, asks—

‘And can you, chiefs, without a blush, survey
Whole troops before you, *lab’ring* in the
‘*fray*?’ B. iv.

So likewise Pandarus, speaking of Diomed, who is performing the utmost efforts of heroism in the field of battle, says—

‘Some guardian of the skies,
‘Involv’d in clouds, protects him in the *fray*.
V. 235.

But what would you think, Euphronius, were you to hear of the ‘impervious foam,’ and ‘rough waves of a brook?’ Would it not put you in mind of that droll thought of the ingenious Dr. Young, in one of his epistles to our author, where he talks of a puddle in a storm? yet, by thus confounding the properties of the highest objects with those of the lowest, Mr. Pope has turned one of the most pleasing similes in the whole Iliad, into downright burlesque—

As when some simple swain his cot forsakes,
And wide thro’ fens an unknown journey takes;

If chance a swelling brook his passage stay,
And foam impervious cross the wand’rer’s way,

Confus’d he stops, a length of country past,
Eyes the rough waves, and tir’d, returns at last. V. 734.

This swelling brook, however, of Mr. Pope, is in Homer a rapid river, rushing with violence into the sea—

Σταγὸν ἐνὶ κρητάρῳ ποταμῷ ἀλάλῃ παραρρέωντι.

V. 598.

It is one of the essential requisites of an epic poem, and indeed of every other kind of serious poetry, that the style be raised above common language; as nothing takes off so much from that solemnity of diction, from which the poet ought never to depart, as idioms of a vulgar and familiar cast. Mr. Pope has sometimes neglected this important rule, but most frequently in the introduction of his speeches. To mention only a few instances.

That done, to Phoenix Ajax gave the sign.

ix. 291.

With that stern Ajax his long silence broke.

ix. 735.

With that the venerable warrior rose.

x. 150.

With that they stepp’d aside, &c.

x. 415.

whereas Homer generally prefaces his speeches with a dignity of phrase, that calls up the attention of the reader to what is going to be uttered. Milton has very happily copied his manner in this particular, as in many others; and though he often falls into a flatness of expression, he has never once, I think, committed that error upon occasions of this kind: He usually ushers in his harangues with something characteristical of the speaker, or that points out some remarkable circumstance of his present situation, in the following manner:

Satan, with bold words

Breaking the horrid silence, thus began.

l. 82.

Him thus answer’d soon his bold compeer.

l. 125.

He ended frowning:

On the other side uprose

Bellal,

And with persuasive accents thus began.

ii. 106.

If you compare the effect which an introduction of this descriptive sort has upon the mind, with those low and unawakening expressions which I have marked in the lines I just now quoted from our English Iliad; you will not, perhaps, consider my objection as altogether without foundation.

All opposition of ideas should be carefully avoided in a poem of this kind, as unbecoming the gravity of the heroic Muse. But does not Mr. Pope sometimes sacrifice simplicity to false ornament, and lose the majesty of Homer in the affectations of Ovid? Of this sort a severe critic would, perhaps, esteem his calling an army marching with spears erect, a *moving iron wood*:

Such and so thick th’ embattled squadrons

stood

With spears erect a *moving iron wood*.

There seems also to be an inconsistency in the two parts of this description; for the troops are represented as standing still, at the same time that the circumstance mentioned of the spears, should rather imply (as indeed the truth is) that

H 2

they

they were in motion. But if the translator had been faithful to his author in this passage, neither of these objections could have been raised: for in Homer it is—

Τῆναι

τοῖς ἄλλοις κλισίαισι

Κλισίαι, ὅθεν αἱ τὴν ἑστῆσαν ἀνδρῶν.

iv. 280.

Is there not likewise some little tendency to a pun, in those upbraiding lines which Hector addresses to Paris?

‘For thee great Ilion’s guardian heroes fall,
‘Till heaps of dead alone defend the wall.’

Mr. Pope at least deserts his guide, in order to give us this conceit of dead men *defending* a town; for the original could not possibly lead him into it. Homer, with a plainness suitable to the occasion, only tells us—

Ἀπὸ μὲν ὀπίσθου τῆς πόλεως, αὐτὸς τὴν πόλιν,

Μηδονόητος.

vi. 427.

Teucer, in the eighth book, aims a dart at Hector, which, missing its way, slew Gorythio; upon which we are told—

Another shaft the raging archer threw;
That other shaft with erring fury flew.
(From Hector Phæbus turn’d the *flying*
wound.)

Yet fell not dry or guiltless to the ground.

A *flying wound* is a thought exactly in the spirit of Ovid; but highly unworthy of Pope as well as of Homer: and, indeed, there is not the least foundation for it in the original. But what do you think of the shaft that fell *dry* or *guiltless*? where, you see, one figurative epithet is added as explanatory of the other. The doubling of epithets, without raising the idea, is not allowable in compositions of any kind; but least of all in poetry. ‘It is,’ says Quintilian, ‘as if every common soldier in an army were to be attended with a valet; you increase your number without adding to your strength.’

But if it be a fault to crowd epithets of the same import one upon the other; it is much more so to employ such as call off the attention from the principal idea to be raised, and turn it upon little or foreign circumstances. When Æneas is wounded by Tydides, Homer describes Venus as conducting him through the thickest tumult of the enemy, and conveying him from the field of battle. But while we are following the hero

with our whole concern, and trembling for the danger which surrounds him on all sides; Mr. Pope leads us off from our anxiety for Æneas, by an uninteresting epithet relating to the structure of those instruments of death, which were every where flying about him; and we are coldly informed, that the darts were *feathered*:

Safe thro’ the rushing horse and *feather’d*
flight

Of sounding shafts, she bears him thro’ the
fight. V. 393.

But as his epithets sometimes debase the general image to be raised; so they now and then adorn them with a false brilliancy. Thus, speaking of a person slain by an arrow, he calls it a *pointed death*, iv. 607. Describing another who was attacked by numbers at once, he tells us—

‘A grove of lances *glitter’d* at his breast.’
ix. 621.

And representing a forest on fire, he says—

‘In blazing heaps the grove’s old honours
‘fall,
‘And one *resplendent* ruin levels all.’
x. 201.

But one of the most unpardonable instances of this kind is, where he relates the death of Hypenor, a person, who, it seems, exercised the sacerdotal office.

On his broad shoulder fell the forceful
brand,
Thence glancing downward lopt his holy
hand,
And stain’d with sacred blood the *blush-*
ing sand.

To take the force of this epithet, we must suppose that the redness which appeared upon the sand on this occasion, was an effect of it’s blushing to find itself stained with the blood of so sacred a person: than which there cannot be a more forced and unnatural thought. It puts me in mind of a passage in a French dramatic writer, who has formed a play upon the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. The hapless maid, addressing herself to the dagger, which lies by the side of her lover, breaks out into the following exclamation—

‘Ab! voici le poignard qui du sang de son
maître
‘S’est souillé lâchement: il en rougit le traitre.
Boileau,

Boileau, taking notice of these lines, observes, *Toutes les glaces du Nord ensemble ne font pas à mon sens, plus froides que cette pensée.* But of the two poets, I know not whether Mr. Pope is not most to be condemned: for whatever shame the poignard might take to itself, for being concerned in the murder of the lover; it is certain that the sand had not the least share in the death of the priest.

The antient critics have insisted much upon propriety of language; and, indeed, one may with great justice say what the insulted Job does to his impatient friends, *How forcible are right words!* The truth is, though the sentiment must always support the expression, yet the expression must give grace and efficacy to the sentiment; and the same thought shall frequently be admired or condemned, according to the merit of the particular phrase in which it is conveyed. For this reason J. Cæsar, in a treatise which he wrote concerning the Latin language, calls a judicious choice of words, *the origin of eloquence*: as indeed neither oratory nor poetry can be raised to any degree of perfection, where this their principal root is neglected. In this art Virgil particularly excels; and it is the inimitable grace of his words (as Mr. Dryden somewhere justly observes) wherein that beauty principally consists, which gives so inexpressible a pleasure to him who best understands their force. No man was ever a more skilful master of this powerful art than Mr. Pope; as he has, upon several occasions throughout his translation, raised and dignified his style with certain antiquated words and phrases, that are most wonderfully solemn and majestic. I cannot, however, forbear mentioning an instance, where he has employed an obsolete term less happily, I think, than is his general custom. It occurs in some lines which I just now quoted for another purpose:

- ‘ On his broad shoulder fell the forceful brand,
‘ Thence glancing downward lopt his holy hand.’
V. 105.

Brand is sometimes used by Spenser for a sword; and in that sense it is here introduced. But as we still retain this word in a different application, it will always be improper to adopt it in its antiquated meaning, because it must necessarily occasion ambiguity: an error in

style of all others the most to be avoided. Accordingly, every reader of the lines I have quoted, must take up an idea very different from that which the poet intends, and which he will carry on with him, till he arrives at the middle of the second verse. And if he happens to be unacquainted with the language of our old writers, when he comes to—

Lopt his holy hand,

he will be lost in a confusion of images, and have absolutely no idea remaining.

There is another uncommon elegance in the management of words, which requires a very singular turn of genius, and great delicacy of judgment to attain. As the art I just before mentioned, turns upon employing antiquated words with force and propriety; so this consists in giving the grace of novelty to the received and current terms of a language, by applying them in a new and unexpected manner:

*Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum
Reddidit junctura novum.*

Hor.

The great caution, however, to be observed in any attempt of this kind, is to judiciously to connect the expressions, as to remove every doubt concerning the signification in which they are designed: for as perspicuity is the end and supreme excellency of writing, there cannot be a more fatal objection to an author's style, than that it stands in need of a commentator. But will not this objection lie against the following verse?

Next *artful* Phereclus untimely fell. V. 75.

The word *artful* is here taken out of its appropriated acceptance, in order to express

ὁ Χερων πικρὸν δαιδαλὸν πικρὸν

ΤΕΥΧΟΣ.

But however allowable it may be (as indeed it is not only allowable, but gracefully to raise a word above its ordinary import, when the *callida junctura* (as Horace calls it) determines at once the sense in which it is used: yet it should never be cast so far back from its customary meaning, as to stand for an idea which has no relation to what it implies, in its primary and natural state. This would be introducing uncertainty and confusion into a language, and turning every sentence into a riddle. Accordingly, after we have travelled on through

the

the several succeeding lines in this passage, we are obliged to change the idea with which we set out, and find, at last, that by the *artful* Phereclus we are to understand, not what we at first apprehend; a man of cunning and design; but one who is skilled in the mechanical arts.

It is with a liberty of the same unsuccessful kind, that Mr. Pope has rendered

Τὸν ἑπὶ τοῖς ἄρμασι Λυκάονος ἡρώδης ἔκβη.
v. 276

Stern Lycaon's warlike race begun.

I know not by what figure of speech the whole race of a man can denote his next immediate descendant: and I fear, no synecdoche can acquit this expression of nonsense. The truth is, whoever ventures to strike out of the common road, must be more than ordinarily careful, or he will probably lose his way.

This reminds me of a passage or two where our poet has been extremely injurious to the sense of his author, and made him talk a language which he never uses; the language, I mean, of absurdity. In the sixth Iliad, Agamemnon assures Menelaus—

Δὴν ἔσθ' ἀνὰ δαίμονα, κενώμενος.
vi. 60.

But in Mr. Pope's version, that chief tells his brother—

Ilium shall perish whole and *bury* all.

Perhaps it may be over-nice to remark, that as the destruction of Troy is first mentioned, it has a little the appearance of nonsense to talk afterwards of her burying her sons. However, the latter part of this verse directly contradicts the original: for Agamemnon is so far from asserting that Ilium should bury all her inhabitants, that he pronounces positively, they should not be buried at all: a calamity, in the opinion of the ancients, of all others the most terrible. But possibly the error may lie in the printer, not in the poet; and perhaps the line originally stood thus:

Ilium shall perish whole, *unbury'd*, all.

If so, both my objections vanish; and those who are conversant with the press, will not think this supposition improbable; since much more unlikely mistakes

often happen by the carelessness of compositors.

But though I am willing to make all the allowance possible to an author, who raises our admiration too often not to have a right to the utmost candour, wherever he fails; yet I can find no excuse for an unaccountable absurdity he has fallen into in translating a passage of the tenth book. Diomed and Ulysses taking advantage of the night, set out in order to view the Trojan camp. In their way they meet with Dolon, who is going from thence to the Grecian, having seized this unfortunate adventurer, and examined him concerning the situation and designs of the enemy; Diomed draws his sword, and strikes off Dolon's head, in the very instant that he is supplicating for mercy:

Θήρυσσεν δ' ἄρα τὴν γὰρ κνήκην κομίζων ἑμυχθῆναι.
x. 457.

Mr. Pope has turned this into a most extraordinary miracle, by assuring us that the head spoke after it had quitted the body:

The head yet speaking, *mutter'd* as it fell.

This puts me in mind of a wonder of the same kind in the Fairy Queen, where Corisambo is represented as blaspheming after his head had been struck off by Prince Arthur.

He smote at him with all his might and main
So furiously, that, ere he wist, he found
His head before him tumbling on the ground,
The whiles his babbling tongue did yet blaspheme,
And curs'd his God, that did him so confound.
Book iv. 8.

But Corisambo was the son of a giantess, and could conquer whole kingdoms by only looking at them. We may, perhaps, therefore allow him to talk, when every other man must be silent: whereas there is nothing in the history of poor Dolon, that can give him the least pretence to this singular privilege. The truth is, Mr. Pope seems to have been led into this blunder by Scaliger, who has given the same sense to the verse, and then with great wisdom and gravity observes, *falsum est a pulmone caput avulsam loqui posse*.

The most pleasing picture in the whole Iliad,

Iliad, is, I think, the parting of Hector and Andropache: and our excellent translator has, in general, very successfully copied it. But in some places he seems not to have touched it with that delicacy of pencil, which graces the original; as he has entirely lost the beauty of one of the figures. Hector is represented as extending his arms to embrace the little Astyanax, who being terrified with the unusual appearance of a man in armour, throws himself back upon his nurse's breast, and falls into tears. But though the hero and his son were designed to draw our principal attention, Homer intended likewise that we should cast a glance towards the nurse. Accordingly, he does not mark her out merely by the name of her office; but adds an epithet to shew that she makes no inconsiderable figure in the piece: he does not simply call her *nurse*, but *glittering terrors*. This circumstance Mr. Pope has entirely overlooked:

Ως ἔστιν, ἢ πῶτος ἐρέστο φαίδιμος Ἑκτορ.
 Ἀδ' ὃ οὐ πῶτος παρὲς ἡδυσσεύς ἐβόηεν
 Ἐκαστὸν ἰσχυρὸν, ὡς δὲ φίλῳ ὅλῳ ἀνέχετο,
 Τερψίτης χεῖρας τε, ἡδ' ὄφρα πατρὸς ἔειπεν,
 Οὐκ ἔτι ἀνδρῶντος καρδίας ἡρώδης ἦεν·
 Ἐκ δ' ἔβρισκετο πατρὶ τε φίλος, καὶ πότνια
 μήνη.

Αὐτὴν ἀπὸ κρατὸς κατ' ἔλκετο φαίδιμος
 Ἑκτορ,
 Καὶ τῇ μὲν κατέβητο ἐπὶ χροὶ σπυγερῶτατος.

vi. 466.

Thus having said, the illustrious chief of
 Troy
 Stretch'd his fond arms to clasp the lovely
 boy;

The babe clung crying to his nurse's breast,
 Scar'd by the dazzling helm and nodding
 crest.

With secret pleasure each fond parent smil'd,
 And Hector hasten'd to relieve his child:
 The *glittering terrors* from his head un-
 bound,
 And placed the beaming helmet on the
 ground.

I was going to object to the *glittering terrors*, in the last line but one: but I have already taken notice of these little affected expostions, where the substantive is set at variance with it's attribute.

It is the observation of Quintilian, that no poet ever excelled Homer in the sublimity with which he treats great subjects, or in the delicacy and propriety he always discovers in the management of small ones. There is a passage in

the ninth Iliad, which will justify the truth of the latter of these observations. When Achilles receives Ajax and Ulysses in his tent, who were sent to him in the name of Agamemnon, in order to prevail with him to return to the army; Homer gives a very minute account of the entertainment which was prepared for them upon that occasion. It is impossible, perhaps, in modern language, to preserve the same dignity in descriptions of this kind, which so considerably raises the original: and indeed Mr. Pope warns his readers not to expect much beauty in the picture. However, a translator should be careful not to throw in any additional circumstances, which may lower and debase the piece; which yet Mr. Pope has, in his version of the following line:

Ἴλαρ δὲ δειπνῶντος δακρυόεντος, ὡς δὲ τις.

ix. 222.

Mean while Patroclus *sweats*, the fire to
 raise.

Owen the truth, Euphronius: does not this give you the idea of a greedy cook at a kitchen fire? whereas nothing of this kind is suggested in the original. On the contrary, the epithet *tearful* seems to have been added by Homer, in order to reconcile us to the meanness of the action, by reminding us of the high character of the person who is engaged in it; and, as Mr. Addison observes of Virgil's husbandman, that 'he talks about his dung with an air of gracefulness;' one may, with the same truth, say of Homer's hero, that he lights his fire with an air of dignity.

I intended to have closed these hasty objections, with laying before you some of those passages, where Mr. Pope seems to have equalled, or excelled his original. But I perceive I have already extended my letter beyond a reasonable limit: I will reserve therefore that more pleasing, as well as much easier task, to some future occasion. In the mean time, I desire you will look upon these remarks, not as proceeding from a spirit of cavil, (than which I know not any more truly contemptible) but as an instance of my having read your favourite poet with that attention, which his own unequalled merit, and your justicious recommendation, most deservedly claim. I am, &c.

LET.

LETTER XLIV:

TO PALAMEDES.

APRIL 18, 1739.

I Have had occasion a thousand times since I saw you, to wish myself *in the land where all things are forgotten*; at least, that I did not live in the memory of certain restless mortals of your acquaintance, who are visitors by profession. The misfortune is, no retirement is so remote, nor sanctuary so sacred, as to afford a protection from their impertinence; and though one were to fly to the desert, and take refuge in the cells of saints and hermits, one should be alarmed with their unmeaning voice crying even *in the wilderness*. They spread themselves, in truth, over the whole face of the land, and lay waste the fairest hours of conversation. For my own part, (to speak of them in a style suitable to their taste and talents) I look upon them, not as paying visits, but *visitations*; and am never obliged to give audience to one of this species, that I do not consider myself as under a judgment for those numberless hours which I have spent in vain. If these sons and daughters of idleness and folly would be persuaded to enter into an exclusive society among themselves, the rest of the world might possess their mo-

ments unmolested: but nothing less will satisfy them than opening a general commerce, and sailing into every port where choice or chance may drive them. Were we to live, indeed, to the years of the Antediluvians, one might afford to resign some part of one's own time, in charitable relief of the unsufferable weight of theirs; but since the days of man are shrunk into a few hasty revolutions of the sun, whole afternoons are much too considerable a sacrifice to be offered up to tame civility. What heightens the contempt of this character, is that they who have so much of the form, have always least of the power of friendship: and though they will *craze their chariot wheels* (as Milton expresses it) to destroy your repose; they would not drive half the length of a street to assist your distress.

It was owing to an interruption from one of these obsequious intruders, that I was prevented keeping my engagement with you yesterday; and you must indulge me in this discharge of my invective against the ridiculous occasion of so mortifying a disappointment. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XLV.

TO HORTENSIVS.

MAY 8, 1747.

TO be able to suppress my acknowledgments of the pleasure I received from your approbation, were to shew that I do not deserve it; for is it possible to value the praise of the judicious as one ought, and yet be silent under it's influence? I can with strict truth say of you what a Greek poet did of Plato, who, reading his performance to a circle where that great philosopher was present, and finding himself deserted at length by all the rest of the company cried out—'I will proceed, nevertheless, for Plato is himself an audience.'

True fame, indeed, is no more in the gift than in the possession of numbers,

as it is only in the disposal of the wife and the impartial. But if both those qualifications must concur to give validity to a vote of this kind, how little reason has an author to be either depressed or elated by general censure or applause?

The triumphs of genius are not like those of ancient heroism, where the meanest captive made a part of the pomp, as well as the noblest. It is not the multitude, but the dignity of those that compose her followers; that can add any thing to her real glory; and a single attendant may often render her more truly illustrious, than a whole train of common admirers. I am sure, at least,

I have

I have no ambition of drawing after me vulgar acclamations; and whilst I have the happiness to enjoy your applause, I

shall always consider myself in possession of the truest fame. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER XLVI.

TO CLYTANDER.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1738.

YOU who never forget any thing, can tell me, I dare say, whose observation it is, That of all the actions of our life nothing is more uncommon, than to laugh or cry with a good grace. But though I cannot recollect the author, I shall always retain his maxim; as, indeed, every day's occurrences suggest the truth of it to my mind. I had particularly an occasion to see one part of it verified in the treatise I herewith return you: for never, surely, was mirth more injudiciously directed, than that which this writer of your acquaintance has employed. To drole upon the established religion of a country, and laugh at the most sacred and inviolable of her ordinances, is as far removed from good politics, as it is from good manners. It is indeed upon maxims of policy alone, that one can reason with those who pursue the principles, which this author has embraced. I will add, therefore, (since, it seems, you sometimes communicate to him my letters) that to endeavour to lessen the veneration which is due to the religious institutions of a nation, when they neither run counter to any of the great lines of morality, nor oppose the natural rights of mankind, is a sort of zeal which I know not by what epithet sufficiently to stigmatize: it is attacking the strongest hold of society, and attempting to destroy the firmest guard of human security. Far am I, indeed, from thinking there is no other; or that the notion of a moral sense is a vain and groundless hypothesis. But wonderfully limited must the experience of those philosophers undoubtedly be, who imagine, that an implanted love of virtue is sufficient to conduct the generality of mankind through the paths of moral duties, and supersede the necessity of a farther and more powerful guide. A sense of honour, likewise, where it operates in its true and genuine vigour, is, I confess, a most noble and powerful principle; but far too refined a motive of ac-

tion, even for the more cultivated part of our species to adopt in general: and in fact, we find it much oftener professed than pursued. Nor are the laws of a community sufficient to answer all the restraining purposes of government; as there are many moral points, which it is impossible to secure by express provisions. Human institutions can reach no farther than to certain general duties, in which the collective welfare of society is more particularly concerned. Whatever else is necessary for the ease and happiness of social intercourse, can be derived only from the assistance of religion; which influences the nicer connections and dependencies of mankind, as it regulates and corrects the heart. How many tyrannies may I exercise as a parent, how many hardships may I inflict as a master, if I take the statutes of my country for the only guides of my actions, and think every thing lawful that is not immediately penal? The truth is, a man may be injured in a variety of instances far more atrociously, than by what the law considers either as a fraud or a robbery. Now in cases of this kind, (and many very important cases of this kind there are) to remove the bars of religion, is to throw open the gates of oppression: it is to leave the honest exposed to the injurious inroads of these (and they are far, perhaps, the greatest part of mankind) who, though they would never do justice and love mercy, in compliance with the dictates of nature; would scrupulously practise both in obedience to the rules of revelation.

The gross of our species can never indeed, be influenced by abstract reasoning, nor captivated by the naked charms of virtue: on the contrary, nothing seems more evident than that the generality of mankind must be engaged by sensible objects, must be wrought upon by their hopes and fears. And this has been the constant maxim of all

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the celebrated legislators, from the earliest establishment of government, to this present hour. It is true, indeed, that none have contended more warmly than the ancients for the dignity of human nature, and the native disposition of the soul to be enamoured with the beauty of virtue: but it is equally true, that none have more strenuously inculcated the expediency of adding the authority of religion to the suggestions of nature, and maintaining a reverence to the appointed ceremonies of public worship. The sentiments of Pythagoras (or whoever he be who was author of those verses which pass under that philosopher's name) are well known upon this subject:

Ἀδελφότης μὴ πρὸς τὴν, νόμον ὡς διακρίνεται,
Τίμα.

Many indeed are the ancient passages which might be produced in support of this assertion, if it were necessary to produce any passages of this kind to you, whom I have to often heard contend for the same truth with all the awakening powers of learning and eloquence. Suffer me, however, for the benefit of your acquaintance, to remind you of one or two, which I do not remember ever to have seen quoted.

Livy has recorded a speech of Appius Claudius Crassus, which he made in opposition to certain demands of the tribunes. That zealous senator warmly argues against admitting the plebeians into a share of the consular dignity; from the power of taking the auspices being originally and solely vested in the patrician order. 'But perhaps,' says Crassus, 'I shall be told, that the pecking of a chicken, &c. are trifles unworthy of regard: trifling, however, as these ceremonies may now be deemed, it was by the strict observance of them, that our ancestors raised this commonwealth to its present point of grandeur.' *Parvā sunt hæc: sed parvā*

ista non contemnendo, majores nostri maximam banc rem fecerunt. Agreeably to this principle, the Roman historian of the life of Alexander describes that monarch, after having killed his friend Clitus, as considering, in his cool moments, whether the gods had not permitted him to be guilty of that horrid act, in punishment for his irreligious neglect of their sacred rites. And Juvenal * imputes the source of that torrent of vice which broke in upon the age in which he wrote, to the general disbelief that prevailed of the public doctrines of their established religion. Those tenets, he tells us, that influenced the glorious conduct of the Curii, the Scipios, the Fabricii, and the Camilli, were in his days, so totally exploded, as scarce to be received even by children. It were well for some parts of the Christian world, if the same observation might not with justice be extended beyond the limits of ancient Rome: and I often reflect upon the very judicious remark of a great writer of the last century, who takes notice, 'That the generality of Christendom is now well-nigh arrived at that fatal condition, which immediately preceded the destruction of the worship of the antient world; when the face of religion, in their public assemblies, was quite different from that apprehension which men had concerning it in private.

Nothing, most certainly, could less plead the sanction of reason, than the general rites of pagan worship. Weak and absurd, however, as they were in themselves, and indeed in the estimation too of all the wiser sort; yet the more thinking and judicious part, both of their statesmen and philosophers, unanimously concurred in supporting them as sacred and inviolable: well persuaded, no doubt, that religion is the strongest cement in the great structure of moral government. Farewel,

I am, &c.

* Sat. II. 149.

LET-

LETTER XLVII.

TO CLEORA.

SEPTEMBER, 1.

I Look upon every day wherein I have not some communication with my Cleora as a day lost; and I take up my pen every afternoon to write to you, as regularly as I drink my tea, or perform any the like important article of my life.

I frequently bless the happy art that affords me a means of conveying myself to you at this distance, and, by an easy kind of magic, thus transports me to your parlour at a time when I could not gain admittance by any other method. Of all people in the world, indeed, none are more obliged to this paper commerce, than friends and lovers. It is by this they elude, in some degree, the malevolence of fate, and can enjoy an intercourse with each other, though the

Alps themselves shall rise up between them. Even this imaginary participation of your society is far more pleasing to me, than the real enjoyment of any other conversation the whole world could supply. The truth is, I have lost all relish for any but yours; and if I were invited to an assembly of all the wits of the Augustan age, or all the heroes that Plutarch has celebrated, I should neither have spirits nor curiosity to be of the party. Yet, with all this indolence or indifference about me, I would take a voyage as far as the pole to sup with Cleora on a lettuce, or only to hold the bowl while the mixed the syllabub. Such happy evenings I once knew: ah, Cleora! will they never return? Adieu.

LETTER XLVIII.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

I Have read the performance you communicated to me, with all the attention you required; and I can with strict sincerity apply to your friend's verses, what an ancient has observed of the same number of Spartans who defended the passage of Thermopylæ—*Nunquam cecidi plures trecentos!* Never, indeed, was there greater energy of language and sentiment united together in the same compass of lines: and it would be an injustice to the world, as well as to himself, to suppress so animated and so useful a composition.

A satirist of true genius, who is warmed by a generous indignation of vice, and whose censures are conducted by candour and truth, merits the applause of every friend to virtue. He may be considered as a sort of supplement to the legislative authority of his country; as assisting the unavoidable defects of all legal institutions for the regulating of manners, and striking terror even where the divine prohibitions themselves are held in contempt. The strongest defence, perhaps, against the inroads of vice, among the more culti-

vated part of our species, is well-directed ridicule: they who fear nothing else, dread to be marked out to the contempt and indignation of the world. There is no succeeding in the secret purposes of dishonesty, without preserving some sort of credit among mankind; as there cannot exist a more impotent creature than a knave convict. To expose, therefore, the false pretensions of counterfeit virtue, is to disarm it at once of all power of mischief, and to perform a public service of the most advantageous kind, in which any man can employ his time and his talents. The voice, indeed, of an honest satirist is not only beneficial to the world, as giving alarm against the designs of an enemy so dangerous to all social intercourse; but as proving likewise the most efficacious preventive to others, of assuming the same character of distinguished infamy. Few are so totally vitiated, as to have abandoned all sentiments of shame; and when every other principle of integrity is surrendered, we generally find the conflict is still maintained in this last post of retreating virtue. In this view, therefore, it

should seem the function of a satirist may be justified, notwithstanding it should be true (what an excellent moralist has asserted) that his chastisements rather exasperate, than reclaim those on whom they fall. Perhaps, no human penalties are of any moral advantage to the criminal himself; and the principal benefit that seems to be derived from civil punishments of any kind, is their restraining influence upon the conduct of others.

It is not every arm, however, that is qualified to manage this formidable blow. The arrows of satire, when they are not pointed by virtue, as well as wit, recoil back upon the hand that directs them, and wound none but him from whom they proceed. Accordingly, Horace rests the whole success of writings of this sort upon the poet's being

integer ipse; free himself from those immoral stains which he points out in others. There cannot, indeed, be a more odious, nor at the same time a more contemptible character than that of a vicious satirist—

*Quis cælum terris non misceat & mare cæcis,
Si fur displiceat Verri, homicida Miloni?*

Juv.

The most favourable light in which a censor of this species could possibly be viewed, would be that of a public executioner, who inflicts the punishment on others which he has already merited himself. But the truth of it is, he is not qualified even for so wretched an office; and there is nothing to be dreaded from a satirist of known dishonesty, but his applause. Adieu.

LETTER XLIX.

TO PALAMEDES.

AUGUST 2, 1734.

CEREMONY is never more unwelcome, than at that season in which you will probably have the greatest share of it; and as I should be extremely unwilling to add to the number of those, who, in pure good manners, may interrupt your enjoyments, I chuse to give you my congratulations a little prematurely. After the happy office shall be completed, your moments will be too valuable to be laid out in forms; and it would be paying a compliment with a very ill grace, to draw off your eyes from the highest beauty, though it were to turn them on the most exquisite wit. I hope, however, you will give me timely notice of your wedding-day, that I may be prepared with my epithalamium. I have already laid in half a dozen deities extremely proper for the occasion, and have even made some progress in my first simile. But I am some-

what at a loss how to proceed, not being able to determine whether your future bride is most like Venus or Hebe. That she resembles both, is universally agreed, I find, by those who have seen her. But it would be offending, you know, against all the rules of poetical justice, if I should only say she is as handsome as she is young, when after all, perhaps, the truth may be, that she has even more beauty than youth. In the meanwhile, I am turning over all the tender compliments that love has inspired, from the Lesbians of Catullus to the Chloe of Prior, and hope to gather such a collection of flowers as may not be unworthy of entering into a garland composed for your Stella. But before you introduce me as a poet, let me be recommended to her by a much better title, and assure her, that I am your, &c.

LETTER L.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

I Am much inclined to join with you in thinking, that the Romans had no peculiar word in their language, which answers precisely to what we call *good-*

sense in ours. For though *prudencia* indeed seems frequently used by their best writers to express that idea, yet it is not confined to that single meaning, but is often

often applied by them to signify skill in any particular science. But good-sense is something very distinct from knowledge; and it is an instance of the poverty of the Latin language, that she is obliged to use the same word as a mark for two such different ideas.

Were I to explain what I understand by good-sense, I should call it right reason; but right reason that arises, not from formal and logical deductions, but from a sort of intuitive faculty in the soul, which distinguishes by immediate perception: a kind of innate sagacity, that in many of it's properties seem very much to resemble instinct. It would be improper, therefore, to say, that Sir Isaac Newton shewed his good-sense by those amazing discoveries which he made in natural philosophy: the operations of this gift of Heaven are rather instantaneous, than the result of any tedious process. Like Diomed, after Minerva had endowed him with the power of discerning gods from mortals, the man of good-sense discovers *at once* the truth of those objects he is most concerned to distinguish; and conducts himself with suitable caution and security.

It is for this reason, possibly, that this quality of the mind is not so often found united with learning as one could wish: for Good-sense being accustomed to receive her discoveries without labour or study, she cannot so easily wait for those truths, which being placed at a distance, and lying concealed under numberless covers, require much pains and application to unfold.

But though good-sense is not in the number, nor always, it must be owned, in the company of the sciences; yet it is, as

the most sensible of poets has justly observed,

Fairly worth the seven.

Rectitude of understanding is indeed the most useful, as well as the most noble of human endowments, as it is the sovereign guide and director in every branch of civil and social intercourse.

Upon whatever occasion this enlightening faculty is exerted, it is always sure to act with distinguished eminence; but it's chief and peculiar province seems to lie in the commerce of the world. Accordingly we may observe, that those who have conversed more with men than with books, whose wisdom is derived rather from experience than contemplation, generally possess this happy talent with superior perfection: for good-sense, though it cannot be acquired, may be improved; and the world, I believe, will ever be found to afford the most kindly soil for it's cultivation.

I know not whether true good-sense is not a more uncommon quality even than true wit; as there is nothing, perhaps, more extraordinary than to meet with a person, whose entire conduct and notions are under the direction of this supreme guide. The single instance at least, which I could produce of it's acting steadily and invariably throughout the whole of character, is that which Euphronius, I am sure, would not allow me to mention: at the same time, perhaps, I am rendering my own pretensions of this kind extremely questionable, when I thus venture to throw before you my sentiments upon a subject, of which you are universally acknowledged so perfect a master. I am, &c.

LETTER LI.

TO PALEMON.

MAY 29, 1743.

I Esteem your letters in the number of my most valuable possessions, and preserve them as so many propheticall *leaves* upon which the fate of our distracted nation is inscribed. But in exchange for the maxims of a patriot, I can only send you the reveries of a recluse, and give you *the stones of the brook for the gold of Optir*. Never, indeed, Palemon, was there a commerce more unequal, than that wherein you

are contented to engage with me; and I could scarce answer it to my conscience to continue a traffic, where the whole benefit accrues singly to myself, did I not know, that to confer without the possibility of an advantage, is the most pleasing exercise of generosity. I will venture then to make use of a privilege which I have long enjoyed; as I well know you love to mix the meditations of the philosopher with the reflections of
the

the statesman, and can turn with equal relish from the politics of Tacitus to the morals of Seneca.

I was in my garden this morning somewhat earlier than usual, when the fun, as Milton describes him,

With wheels yet hov'ring o'er the ocean brim
Shot parallel to th' earth his dewy ray.

There is something in the opening of the dawn at this season of the year, that enlivens the mind with a sort of cheerful seriousness, and fills it with a certain calm rapture in the consciousness of it's existence. For my own part at least, the rising of the sun has the same effect on me, as it is said to have had on the celebrated statue of Memnon: and I never observe that glorious luminary breaking out upon me, that I do not find myself harmonized for the whole day.

Whilst I was enjoying the freshness and tranquillity of this early season, and considering the many reasons I had to join in offering up that *morning incense*, which the poet I just now mentioned represents as particularly arising at this hour *from the earth's great altar*; I could not but esteem it as a principal blessing, that I was entering upon a new day with health and spirits. To awake with recruited vigour for the transactions of life, is a mercy so generally dispensed, that it passes, like other the ordinary bounties of Providence, without making it's due impression. Yet were one never to rise under these happy circumstances, without reflecting what numbers there are, who (to use the language of the most pathetic of authors) when they said—*My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint*; were, like him, *full of tossings to and fro, unto the dawning of the day, or scared with dreams, and terrified through visions*—were one to consider, I say, how many pass their nights in all the horrors of a disturbed imagination, or all the wakefulness of real pains, one could not find one's self exempt from such uneasy slumbers or such terrible vigils, without double satisfaction and gratitude. There is nothing, indeed, contributes more to render a man contented with that draught of life which is poured out to himself, than thus to reflect on those more bitter ingredients which are sometimes mingled in the cup of others.

In pursuing the same vein of thought, I could not but congratulate myself, that I had no part in that turbulent drama which was going to be re-acted upon the great stage of the world; and rejoiced that it was my fortune to stand a distant and unengaged spectator of those several characters that would shortly fill the scene. This suggested to my remembrance a passage in the Roman tragic poet, where he describes the various pursuits of the busy and ambitious world in very just and lively colours—

*Ille superbos aditus regum
Durasque fores, expertis somni,
Colit: Hic nullo sine beatas
Componit opes, gasis inebrians,
Et congesto pauper in auro est.
Illum populi favor attonitum,
Fluctuque magis mobile vulgus,
Aura tumidam tollit inani.
Hic clamorosi rabiosa fori
Furgia vendenti impræbus, iras
Et verba locat.*

And I could not forbear saying to myself, in the language of the same author—

*"Mæ mea tellus
Lare securo tutoque tegat!"*

Yet this circumstance, which your friend considers as so valuable a privilege, has been esteemed by others as the most severe of afflictions. The celebrated Count de Buffi Rabutin has written a little treatise, wherein, after having shewn that the greatest man upon the stage of the world are generally the most unhappy, he closes the account by producing himself as an instance of the truth of what he had been advancing. But can you guess, Palemon, what this terrible disaster was, which thus entitled him to a rank in the number of these unfortunate heroes? He had composed, it seems, certain satirical pieces which gave offence to Lewis the XIVth; for which reason that monarch banished him from the slavery and dependance of a court, to live in ease and freedom at his country-house. But the world had taken too strong possession of his heart, to suffer him to leave even the worst part of it without reluctance; and, like the patriarch's wife, he looked back with regret upon the scene from which he was kindly driven, though there was nothing in the prospect but flames. Adieu. I am, &c.

I. E. T.

LETTER LII.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

AUGUST 20, 1742.

SURELY, Euphronius, the spirit of criticism has strangely possessed you. How else could you be willing to step aside so often from the amusements of the gayest scenes, in order to examine with me certain beauties, far other than those which at present, it might be imagined, would wholly engage your attention? Who, indeed, that sees my friend over-night supporting the vivacity of the most sprightly assemblies, would expect to find him the next morning gravely poring over antiquated Greek, and weighing the merits of ancient and modern geniuses? But I have long admired you as an elegant *spectator formarum*, in every sense of the expression; and you can turn, I know, from the charms of beauty to those of wit, with the same refinement of taste and rapture. I may venture therefore to resume our critical correspondence without the form of an apology; as it is the singular character of Euphronius, to reconcile the philosopher with the man of the world, and judiciously divide his hours between action and retirement.

What has been said of a celebrated French translator, may with equal justice be applied to Mr. Pope, That it is doubtful whether the dead or the living are most obliged to him. His translations of Homer, and imitations of Horace, have introduced to the acquaintance of the English reader, two of the most considerable authors in all antiquity; as indeed they are equal to the credit of so many original works. A man must have a very considerable share of the different spirit which distinguishes those most admirable poets, who is capable of representing, in his own language, so true an image of their respective *manners*. If we look no farther than these works themselves, without considering them with respect to any attempts of the same nature which have been made by others, we shall have sufficient reason to esteem them for their own intrinsic merit. But how will this uncommon genius rise in our admiration, when we compare his classical translations with those similar perform-

ances, which have employed some of the most celebrated of our poets? I have lately been turning over the Iliad with this view; and perhaps it will be no unentertaining amusement to you, to examine the several copies which I have collected of the original, as taken by some of the most considerable of our English masters. To single them out for this purpose according to the order of the particular books, or passages, upon which they have respectively exercised their pencils, the pretensions of Mr. Tickel stand first to be examined.

The action of the Iliad opens, you know, with the speech of Chryses, whose daughter, having been taken captive by the Grecians, was allotted to Agamemnon. This venerable priest of Apollo is represented as addressing himself to the Grecian chiefs, in the following pathetic simplicity of eloquence.

Ατρεΐδαι τέ, καὶ ἄλλοι ἰσχυροὶ Ἀχαιοί,
Τί μιν Διὸς δούτ', ὀλεσμέναις θυμέτ' ἐχέουσιν;
Ἐκπύρου Πριάμου πόλιν, τί δ' ἀνάδ' ἡσθίον;
Παῖδά δέ μοι δασαίνε σῶσον, τὰ δ' ἄπαντα δέχου.
Ἀδύμενοι Διὸς μὴ νοσήσαν Ἀπώδωτα.

i. 47.

'Great Atreus' sons, and warlike Greece,
'attend,
'Somay th'immortal Gods your cause defend,
'Somay you Priam's lofty bulwarks burn,
'And rich in gather'd spoils to Greece return,
'As, for these gifts, my daughter you bestow,
'And reverence due to great Apollo shew,
'Jove's fav'rite offspring, terrible in war,
'Who sends his shafts unerring from afar.'

TICKEL.

That affecting tenderness of the father, which Homer has marked out by the melancholy flow of the line, as well as by the endearing expression of

Παῖδά δέ μοι δασαίνε σῶσον,

is entirely lost by Mr. Tickel. When Chryses coldly mentions his daughter, without a single epithet of concern or affection, he seems much too indifferent himself to move the audience in his favour. But the whole passage, as it stands in Mr. Pope's Iliad, is in general animated with a far more lively spirit of poetry. Who can observe the moving posture

posture of supplication in which he has drawn the venerable old priest, stretching out his arms in all the affecting warmth of intreaty, without sharing in his distress, and melting into pity?

Ye kings and warriors! may your vows be crown'd

And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground:

May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er,

Safe to the pleasures of your native shore:

But, oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,

And give Chryseis to these arms again.

If mercy fail, yet let my presents move,

And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove.

POPE.

The insinuation with which Chryseis closes his speech, that the Grecians must expect the indignation of Apollo would pursue them if they rejected the petition of his priest, is happily intimated by a single epithet—

And dread avenging Phœbus;

whereas the other translator takes the compass of three lines to express the same thought less strongly.

When the heralds are sent by Agamemnon to Achilles, in order to demand Briseis; that chief is prevailed upon to part with her: and accordingly directs Patroclus to deliver up this contested beauty into their hands:

Πατρόκλ' εἰ φίλῳ παραστήθῃς ἑταίρῳ,
Ἐκ δ' αἰγυγὴ κλέων; βρισηίδα καλλυπαμένην,
Δωκεῖ δ' αἰγυγὴ τῷ δὲ αὐτῷ ἵππῳ ἑταίρῳ νῆες
Ἀχαιῶν
Ἡ δ' αἰγυγὴ ἅμα τοῖσι γυγῶν κίον' i. 345.

The beauty of Chryseis, as described in these lines, together with the reluctance with which she is here represented as forced from her lord, cannot but touch the reader in a very sensible manner. Mr. Tickel, however has debased this affecting picture, by the most unpoetical and familiar diction. I will not delay you with making my objections in form to his language; but have distinguished the exceptionable expressions in the lines themselves:

Patroclus his dear friend oblig'd,
And usher'd in the lovely weeping maid;
Sore sigh'd she, as the heralds took her hand,
And oft look'd back, slow-moving o'er the strand.

TICKEL.

Our British Homer has restored this piece to it's original grace and delicacy:

Patroclus now th' unwilling beauty brought:
She, in soft sorrows, and in pensive thought,
Pass'd silent, as the heralds held her hand,
And oft look'd back, slow-moving o'er the strand.

POPE.

The tumultuous behaviour of Achilles, as described by Homer in the lines immediately following, afford a very pleasing and natural contrast to the more composed and silent sorrow of Briseis. The poet represents that hero as suddenly rushing out from his tent, and flying to the sea-shore, where he gives vent to his indignation; and in bitterness of soul complains to Thetis, not only of the dishonour brought upon him by Agamemnon, but of the injustice even of Jupiter himself:

αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεύς
Δακρυόσπις, ἑταίρῳ αἶψα ἔβητο κοῦρῳ δῖος Ἴδης,
Θεὸν ἑὸν ἄλως πύλον, ὅραυ ἐπὶ ὀνόματι ποταμῶν.
Πόλλος δὲ μοῖρῃ φίλῳ κρηναῖο χυμῶν ἔρρηκε,
ἔκ. i. 348.

Mr. Tickle, in rendering the sense of these lines, has risen into a somewhat higher flight of poetry than usual. However, you will observe his expression in one or two places is exceedingly languid and prosaical; as the epithet he has given to the waves is highly injudicious. *Curling billows* might be very proper in describing a calm, but suggests too pleasing an image to be applied to the ocean when represented as *black with storms*.

The widow'd hero, when the Fair was gone,
Far from his friends sat bath'd in tears, alone.
On the cold beach he sat, and fix'd his eyes
Where, black with storms, the curling billows rise.

And as the sea wide-rolling he survey'd,
With out-stretch'd arms to his fond mother pray'd.

TICKEL.

Mr. Pope has opened the thought in these lines with great dignity of numbers, and exquisite propriety of imagination; as the additional circumstances which he has thrown in, are so many beautiful improvements upon his author:

Not so his loss the fierce Achilles bore:
But sad retiring to the sounding shore,
O'er the wild margin of the deep he hung,
That kindred deep from which his mother sprung:

Then bath'd in tears of anger and disdain,
Thus loud lamented to the stormy main.

POPE.

Apollo

Apollo having sent a plague among the Grecians, in resentment of the injury done to his priest Chryses by detaining his daughter, Agamemnon consents that Chryseis shall be restored. Accordingly a ship is fitted out under the command of Ulysses, who is employed to conduct the damsel to her father. That hero and his companions being arrived at Chrysa, the place to which they were bound, deliver up their charge; and having performed a sacrifice to Apollo, set sail early the next morning for the Grecian camp. Upon this occasion Homer exhibits to us a most beautiful sea-piece:

Ἡμῶν δ' ἦν ἄλλος καὶ ἰδὼν, καὶ ἐπὶ κρητὸν ὄρεθι,
 Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ μετὰ τὸν ποταμὸν ἔμελλεν ἵκησθαι.
 Ἡμῶν δ' ἦν ἄλλος φασὶν ὁδοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ,
 Καὶ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τὸν ἀνατολὴν μῆλα ἔστρεψεν ἑκείνῳ
 Ἀχαιοῖς.
 Τῶν δ' ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς Ἀπολλῶν.
 Οἱ δ' ἔσαν ἑστῶτες, οἱ δ' ἔσαν ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς.
 Εἰ δ' αὖτις ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς, αὖτις δὲ ἡμεῖς
 Στῆναι παρὰ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἡμεῖς, ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς.
 Ἡ δ' ὄντι καὶ ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς ἡμεῖς.
 i. 474.

If there is any passage throughout Mr. Tickell's translation of this book, which has the least pretence to stand in competition with Mr. Pope's version; it is undoubtedly that which corresponds with the Greek lines just now quoted. It would indeed be an instance of great partiality not to acknowledge, they breathe the true spirit of poetry; and I must own myself at a loss which to prefer upon the whole; though I think Mr. Pope is evidently superior to his rival, in his manner of opening the description:

Atev'ning thro' the shore dispers'd they sleep,
 Hush'd by the distant roarings of the deep.
 When now, ascending from the shades of night,
 Aurora glow'd in all her rosy light.
 The daughter of the dawn: th' awaken'd crew
 Back to the Greeks encamp'd their course re-
 new.
 The breezes freshen; for with friendly gales
 Apollo swelled their wide-distended sails;
 Cleft by the rapid prow the waves divide,
 And in hoarse murmurs break on either side.
 TICKELL.

'Twas night: the chiefs beside their vessel lie,
 Till rosy morn had purpled o'er the sky:
 Then launch, and hoise the mast; indulgent
 gales,
 Supply'd by Phœbus, fill the swelling sails:
 The milk-white canvas belying as they blow,
 The parted ocean foams and roars below:
 Above the bounding billows swift they flew,
 &c.
 POPE.

There is something wonderfully pleasing in that judicious pause, which Mr. Pope has placed at the beginning of these lines. It necessarily awakens the attention of the reader, and gives a much greater air of solemnity to the scene, than if the circumstance of the time had been less distinctly pointed out, and blended, as in Mr. Tickell's translation, with the rest of the description.

Homer has been celebrated by antiquity for those sublime images of the Supreme Being, which he so often raises in the Iliad. It is Macrobius, if I remember right, who informs us, that Phidias being asked from whence he took the idea of his celebrated statue of Olympian Jupiter, acknowledged that he had heated his imagination by the following lines:

Ἡ, καὶ κενεῖται ἐν' ὀρεσὶ νεῦσι Κρονίῳ
 Ἀμβροσίῳ δ' ἀπὸ χυμῶν ἐπερωτῶντο ἀνέκλιντος,
 Κρονίῳ δ' ἀπὸ ἀθανάτων· μέγας δ' ὠκυμένη
 ποτὶ
 i. 529

But whatever magnificence of imagery Phidias might discover in the original, the English reader will scarce, I imagine, conceive any thing very grand and sublime from the following copy:

This said, his kingly brow the fire inclin'd,
 The large black curls fell awful from behind,
 Thick shadowing the stern forehead of the god:
 Olympus trembled at th' almighty nod.

TICKELL.

That our modern statuarys, however, may not have an excuse for burlesquing the figure of the great father of gods and men, for want of the benefit of so animating a model; Mr. Pope has preserved it to them in all it's original majesty:

He spoke, and awful bends his sable brows;
 Shakes his ambrosial curls and gives the nod;
 The stamp of fate, and sanction of the god:
 High heav'n with trembling the dread signal
 took,

And all Olympus to the centre shook. POPE.

I took occasion, in a former letter to make some exceptions to a passage or two in the parting of Hector and Andromache, as translated by your favourite poet. I shall now produce a few lines from the same beautiful episode for another purpose, and in order to shew, with how much more masterly a hand, even than Dryden himself, our great improver of English poetry has worked upon the same subject.

As Andromache is going to the tower
 K of

of Ilium, in order to take a view of the field of battle, Hector meets her, together with her son the young Astyanax, at the Scaean gate. The circumstances of this sudden interview are finely imagined. Hector in the first transport of his joy is unable to utter a single word, at the same time that Andromache tenderly embracing his hands, bursts out into a flood of tears :

Ητοι ο μιν μενίσσων ἰδὼν ἱς πάλαι σιωπῇ
 Ἀνδρμαχη δὲ αἰ αὖτις περιπαλοῖ δακρυχέουσα,
 Εἰς αἶψα αἰ φε χερσὶ, ἐπὶ τ' ἑσπῇ, ἱκ' ὀνομαζέ.
 vi. 404.

Dryden has translated this passage with a cold and unpoetical fidelity, to the mere letter of the original :

Hector beheld him with a silent smile,
 His tender wife stood weeping by the while,
 Press'd in her own his warlike hand she took,
 Then sigh'd, and thus prophetically spoke.

DRYDEN.

But Pope has judiciously taken a larger compass, and by heightening the piece with a few additional touches, has wrought it up in all the affecting spirit of tenderness and poetry :

Silent the warrior smil'd, and pleas'd resign'd
 To tender passions all his mighty mind :
 His beauteous princess cast a mournful look,
 Hung on his hand, and then dejected spoke ;
 Her bosom labour'd with a boding sigh,
 And the big tear stood trembling in her eye.

POPE.

Andromache afterwards endeavours to persuade Hector to take upon himself the defence of the city, and not hazard a life so important, she tells him, to herself and his son, in the more dangerous action of the field.

Τῇ δ' αὖτις προσέειπε μέγας κορυθαίολος Ἑκ-
 τὼρ.
 Ἡ καὶ ἡμεῖς παῖδες πᾶντα μέλει, γένει' ἄλλα μέλ'
 αὐτοῦς
 Ἀνδρῶναι Τρώες καὶ Τρῳάδας ἀκιστοπέπλους.
 Αὐτοὶ, καὶ αὖτις, ποτὶν ἀνιστάμεθα πολέμοιο.
 vi. 440.

To whom the noble Hector thus reply'd—

' That and the rest are in my daily care ;
 ' But should I shun the dangers of the war,
 ' With scorn the Trojans would reward my
 ' pains,
 ' And their proud ladies with their sweeping
 ' trains.

' The Grecian swords and lances I can bear :
 ' But loss of honour is my only care.' DRYD.

Nothing can be more flat and unanimated than these lines. One may say

upon this occasion, what Dryden himself, I remember somewhere observes, that a good poet is no more like himself in a dull translation, than his dead carcass would be to his living body. To catch, indeed, the soul of our Grecian bard, and breathe his spirit into an English version, seems to have been a privilege reserved solely for Pope :

The chief reply'd—' That post shall be my
 ' care ;

' Nor that alone, but all the works of war.

' How would the sons of Troy, in arms re-
 ' nown'd,

' And Troy's proud dames, whose garments
 ' sweep the ground,

' Attain the lustre of my former name,

' Should Hector basely quit the fields of
 ' fame ?' POPE.

In the farther prosecution of this episode Hector prophesies his own death, and the destruction of Troy ; to which he adds, that Andromache should be led captive into Argos, where, among other disgraceful offices, which he particularly enumerates, she should be employed, he tells her, in the servile task of drawing water. The different manner in which this last circumstance is expressed by our two English poets, will afford the strongest instance, how much additional force the same thought will receive from a more graceful turn of phrase :

Or from deep wells the living stream to take,
 And on thy weary shoulders bring it back.

DRYDEN.

Or bring

The weight of waters from Hyperia's spring.
 POPE.

It is in certain peculiar turns of diction that the language of poetry is principally distinguished from that of prose ; as indeed the same words are, in general, common to them both. It is in a turn of this kind, that the beauty of the last quoted line consists. For the whole grace of the expression would vanish, if, instead of the two substantives which are placed at the beginning of the verse, the poet had employed the more common syntax of a substantive with it's adjective.

When this faithful pair have taken their final adieu of each other, Hector returns to the field of battle, at the same time that the disconsolate Andromache joins her maidens in the palace. Homer describes this circumstance in the following tender manner—

Ω: ἀρα φησὶν καὶ τὸ ἄλλο φαιδόμεν· Ἐκείν
 Ἰππικὸν ἀποχρῶν δι' αἰὶν αἰσάει βέλτεται
 Ἐνταυτοῖς φησιν, Ὡς αὖτε κατὰ δόξαν γινώσκει
 Αἴψα δ' ἐπείθεται ἄλλοις· ἐν ταῦτασι δὲ
 Ἐκείνους ἀνέχοντες· καὶ γὰρ τὸ δ' ἐπὶ τὴν πολλὰν
 Ἀμφιπόλιν, ὅταν δὲ γόνυ πεσόντων ἐκέρσεται
 Αἰ μὲν τὴν ζώνην γόνυ Ἐκέρσεται ἐν τῇ αἰσῇ. vi. 494.

I will make no remarks upon the different success of our two celebrated poets in translating this passage; but, after having laid both before you, leave their versions to speak for themselves. The truth is, the disparity between them is much too visible to require any comment to render it more observable—

At this for new replies he did not stay,
But lac'd his crested helm, and strode away.
His lovely consort to her house return'd,
And looking often back, in silence mourn'd:
Home when she came, her secret woe she vents,
And fills the palace with her loud laments.
Those loud laments her echoing maids restore,
And Hector, yet alive, as dead deplore.

DRYDEN.

Thus having said, the glorious chief resumes
His tow'ry helmet, black with shading plumes.
His prince's parts with a prophetic sigh,
Unwilling parts, and oft reverts her eye,
That stream'd at every look : then moving
slow.

Sought her own palace, and indulg'd her woe.
There, while her tears deplor'd the godlike
man.

Thro' all the train the soft infection ran ;
The pious maids their mingled sorrow shed,
And mourn the living Hector as the dead.

POPE.

As I purpose to follow Mr. Pope through those several parts of the Iliad, where any of our distinguished poets have gone before him; I must lead you on till we come to the speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus, in the xiith book.

Παύλει, τὴν δὴ καὶ τετραμνησθῆς μελέσας
 Ἐδρ' τι, κρείσσιν τι, ἰδὲ πάλαις δέκασιςιν,
 Ἐν Ἀσκή, πρὸς δὲ, **Δευ**ς ὡς ἱστορεῖται,
 Καὶ τιμὸς νημεριεσθῆς μετὰ **Ξανθοῦ** πρὸς
 οὐρα;

Καὶ οὖν, ῥυτίδες καὶ αἰμαρὶς περιβόητος·
 Τῶν γὰρ Λυκιστῶν μέγας παρτοσὶν ἵστας,
 Ἐσπερ, αἶμα μάχης· καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐλπίδα·
 Ὅρα τίς αὖδ' ἐπὶ Λυκιστῶν πικρὴ διαφρίσκει,
 Ὅς μοι αἰνέειν Διὸς καὶ καὶ ἀνθρώπων
 Ἡμετέρης βεβήλους, ἔδωκεν ἐκ ποταμῶν,
 Ὅστι' ἔστιναι, μελίσσι· ἅλλ' ἄρα καὶ ἐς
 Ἐσθλὴν, ἐπὶ Λυκιστῶν μέγας πῦρ τοῖσι μάχῃσιν.
 Ἄ πῦρ, ἃ μὲν γὰρ πολέμοιο πῦρ τοῖσι
 ῥυτίδες.

Αὐτὸς δὲ πολλοὺς αἰσῶν τ' ἀβινατω τῇ
 ἑστῶν, ὥτε καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ὠρυτοσίμῳ μαχομένη,
 ὅτε καὶ σὲ πολλοὺς μάχη ἐς κιδιανύσαν.
 Νῆξ δ' (ἡμῖς γὰρ κίχες ἀνέκασιν) ἴσταντο

Μυρια, ας ἔτι φυγῇ βροτῶν ἐδ' ὑπαλῦξαι)
 Ἰομῆν' ἡμ' τῷ εὐχοῖ οὐρεζομένη, ἡε τις ἡμῶν.

xü. 310.

This spirited speech has been translated by the famous author of Cooper's Hill:

Above the rest why is our pomp and pow'r?
Our flocks, our herds, and our possessions
more?

Why all the tributes land and sea affords,
Heap'd in great chargers, load our sumptuous
boards?

Our cheerful guests carouse the sparkling
tears

Of the rich grape, whilst music charms their
ears,

Why, as we pass, do those on Xanthus' shore
As gods behold us, and as gods adore?

But that, as well in danger as degree,
We stand the first: that when our Lycians see
Our brave examples, they admiring say—

' Behold our gallant leaders ! these are they
 ' Deserve their greatness; and unenvy'd stand,
 ' Since what they aft transcend what they
 ' command.'

Could the declining of this fate, oh! friend,
Our date to immortality extend,
Or if death sought not them, who seek not
death.

Would I advance? or should my vainer breath
With such a glorious folly thee inspire?

But since with fortune nature doth conspire;
Since age, disease, or some less noble end,
Tho' not less certain, does our days attend;
Since 'tis decreed, and to this period led
A thousand ways, the noblest path we'll tread;
And bravely on, till they, or we, or all,
A common sacrifice to honour fall.

DENHAM.

Mr. Pope passes so high an encomium on these lines, as to assure us, that, if his translation of the same passage has any spirit, it is in some degree due to them. It is certain they have great merit, considering the state of our English versification when Denham flourished: but they will by no means support Mr. Pope's compliment, any more than they will bear to stand in competition with his numbers. And I dare say, you will join with me in the same opinion, when you consider the following version of this animated speech:

Why boast we, Glaucus, our extended reign,
Where Xanthus' streams enrich the Lycian
plain?

Our num'rous herds that range the fruitful
field,

And hills where vines their purple harvest
yield?

Our foaming bowls with purer nectar crown'd,
Our feasts enhanc'd with music's sprightly
 sound?

K 2

Why

Why on these shores are we with joy survey'd,
Admir'd as heroes, and as gods obey'd?
Unless great acts superior merit prove,
And vindicate the bounteous powers above;
That when with wond'ring eyes our martial

bands
Behold our deeds transcending our commands,
Such, they may cry, deserve the sov'reign
state,

Whom those that envy dare not imitate.
Could all our care elude the gloomy grave,
Which claims no less the fearful than the
brave,

For lust of fame I should not vainly dare
In fighting fields, nor urge thy soul to war.
But since, alas! ignoble age must come,
Disease, and death's inexorable doom;
The life, which others pay, let us bestow,
And give to fame what we to nature owe;
Brave tho' we fall, and honour'd if we live,
Or let as glory gain, or glory give. POPE.

If any thing can be justly objected to this translation, it is, perhaps, that in one or two places it is too diffused and descriptive for that agitation in which it was spoken. In general, however, one may venture to assert, that it is warmed with the same ardour of poetry and heroism that glows in the original; as those several thoughts, which Mr. Pope has intermixed of his own, naturally arise out of the sentiments of his author, and are perfectly conformable to the character and circumstances of the speaker.

I shall close this review with Mr. Congreve; who has translated the petition of Priam to Achilles for the body of his son Hector, together with the lamentations of Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen.

Homer represents the unfortunate king of Troy, as entering unobserved into the tent of Achilles; and illustrates the surprise which arose in that chief and his attendants, upon the first discovery of Priam, by the following simile:

ὣς δ' ὅτε στυγ' ἄνθρωπον πικρὸν δακρύ, ὅς τ' ἐν
πύλῃ
ὄψατο κλεισμένης ἄλλοι ἐξελθὼ δακρυῖ,
Ἀνδρὲς ἔς αὐτον, δακρυῖ δ' ἔχον παρὰ πύλῃ.
ὣς Ἀχιλλεύς δακρυῖσιν, ὡς Πριάμου δακρυῖ.
xxiv. 480.

Nothing can be more languid and inelegant than the manner in which Congreve has rendered this passage:

But as a wretch who has a murder done,
And seeking refuge, does from justice run;
Entering some house, in haste, where he's
unknown,
Creates amazement in the lookers-on:

So did Achilles gaze, surpris'd to see
The godlike Priam's royal misery. CONG.

But Pope has raised the same thought with his usual grace and spirit:

As when a wretch, who, conscious of his
crime,
Pursu'd for murder, flies his native clime,
Just gains some frontier, breathless, pale,
amaz'd!

All gaze, all wonder: thus Achilles gaz'd.
POPE.

The speech of Priam is wonderfully pathetic and affecting. He tells Achilles, that out of fifty sons he had one only remaining; and of him he was now unhappily bereaved by his sword. He conjures him by his tenderness for his own father to commiserate the most wretched of parents, who, by an uncommon severity of fate, was thus obliged to kiss those hands which were imbrued in the blood of his children:

τὴν τὴν μὲν ἴδοντες Ἀχιλλεύς,
Ἀποκρίσας ποταμοῖο φέρω δ' ὡπλιστ' ἔπειτα,
Ἀλλ' αὖτις δαίς, Ἀχιλλεῦ, αὐτοῖς τ' ἰδούσιν,
Μηστραμένους σὺ παῖδες τοῦ δ' ὀδυνηδὺς παρ
ἔλπον δ', οὐ μὴ τις ἐπιχθόνιος βροτὸς ἄλλος;
Ἀδρὲς παῖδες αὐτοῦ πόλιν σφραγίσας ἔσθ' ἔσθ' αὖτις.
v. 501.

These moving lines Mr. Congreve has debased into the lowest and most unaffectionate prose:

For his sake only I am hither come;
Rich gifts I bring, and wealth, an endless
sum;

All to redeem that fatal prize you won,
A worthless ransom for so brave a son.
Fear the just gods, Achilles, and on me
With pity look, think, you your father see;
Such as I am, he is; alone in this,
I can no equal have in miseries;
Of all mankind most wretched and forlorn,
Bow'd with such weight as never has been
borne;

Reduc'd to kneel and pray to you, from whom
The spring and source of all my sorrows come;
With gifts to court mine and my country's
bane,
And kiss those hands which have my children
slain. CONGREG.

Nothing could compensate the trouble of labouring through these heavy and tasteless rhymes; but the pleasure of being relieved at the end of them with a more lively prospect of poetry:

For him thro' hostile camps I bent my way,
For him thus prostrate at thy feet I lay;
Large gifts proportion'd to thy wrath I bear;
O hear the wretched, and the gods reverse!
Think

Think of thy father, and this face behold !
See him in me, as helpless and as old !
Tho' not so wretched : there he yields to me,
The first of men in sov'reign misery ;
Thus forc'd to kneel, thus grov'ling to embrace

The scourge and ruin of my realm and race :
Suppliant my children's murd'rer to implore,
And kifs those hands yet reeking with their
gore. POPE.

Achilles having at length consented
to restore the dead body of Hector,
Priam conducts it to his palace. It is
there placed in funeral pomp, at the
same time that mournful dirges are
sung over the corpse, intermingled with
the lamentations of Andromache, He-
cuba, and Helen—

τοῖς μὲν πενθεῖ
Τρῶες πένοντο Διὸς, ὡς ἐν ἡμετέροις,
ὅρῳσι ἔχοντες οἷα συνέστασι θεῶν,
Οἱ μὲν αὖ θρήνην, αἱ δὲ συνέχοντο γυναικες.

v. 719.

There is something extremely solemn
and affecting in Homer's description of
this scene of sorrow. A translator, who
was touched with the least spark of
poetry, could not, one should imagine,
but rise beyond himself, in copying
after so noble an original. It has not,
however, been able to elevate Mr.
Congreve above his usual flatness of
numbers :

Then laid
With care the body on a sumptuous bed,

And round about were skilful fingers plac'd,
Who wept and sigh'd, and in sad notes express'd
Their moan : all in a chorus did agree
Of universal, mournful harmony.

CONGREVE.

It would be the highest injustice to
the following lines to quote them in
opposition to those of Mr. Congreve : I
produce them, as marked with a vein of
poetry much superior even to the ori-
ginal.

They weep, and place him on a bed of state.
A melancholy choir attend around
With plaintive sighs and music's solemn
found :

Alternately they sing, alternate flow
Th' obedient tears, melodious in their woe ;
While deeper sorrows groan from each full
heart.

And nature speaks at ev'ry pause of art.

POPE.

Thus, Euphronius, I have brought
before you some of the most renowned
of our British bards, contending, as it
were, for the prize of poetry : and there
can be no debate to whom it justly be-
longs. Mr. Pope seems, indeed, to
have raised our numbers to the highest
possible perfection of strength and har-
mony : and, I fear, all the praise that
the best succeeding poets can expect, as
to their versification, will be, that they
have happily imitated his manner.
Farewel. I am, &c.

LETTER LIII.

TO ORONTES.

JULY 2, 1741.

YOUR letter found me just upon
my return from an excursion in-
to Berkshire, where I had been paying
a visit to a friend, who is drinking the
waters at Sunning Hill. In one of my
morning rides over that delightful coun-
try, I accidentally passed through a little
village, which afforded me much agree-
able meditation ; as in times to come,
perhaps, it will be visited by the lovers
of the polite arts, with as much vena-
tions as Virgil's tomb or any other cele-
brated spot of antiquity. The place I
mean is Binfield, where the poet to
whom I am indebted (in common with
every reader of taste) for so much ex-
quisite entertainment, spent the earliest
part of his youth. I will not scruple to

confess that I looked upon the scene
where he planned some of those beauti-
ful performances to which first recom-
mended him to the notice of the world,
with a degree of enthusiasm ; and could
not but consider the ground as sacred
that was impressed with the footsteps of
a genius that undoubtedly does the
highest honour to our age and nation.

The situation of mind in which I found
myself upon this occasion, suggested to
my remembrance a passage in Tully,
which I thought I never so thoroughly
entered into the spirit of before. That
noble author, in one of his philosophi-
cal conversation-pieces, introduces his
friend Atticus as observing the pleasing
effect which scenes of this nature are
wont

went to have upon one's mind : *Movetur enim* (says that polite Roman) *nescio quo pacto, locis ipsis, in quibus eorum, quos diligimus aut admiramur, adjunt vestigia. Me quidem ipse ille nostræ Athenæ, non tam operibus magnificis exquisitisque antiquorum artibus delectant, quam recordatione summorum virorum, ubi quisque habitare, ubi sedere, ubi disputare solitus.*

Thus, you see, I could defend myself by an example of great authority, were I in danger upon this occasion of being ridiculed as a romantic visionary. But I am too well acquainted with the refined sentiments of Orontes, to be under any apprehension he will condemn the impressions I have here acknowledged. On the contrary, I have often heard you mention with approbation a circumstance of this kind which is related of Silius Italicus. The annual ceremonies which that poet performed at Virgil's sepulchre, gave you a more favourable opinion of his taste, you confessed, than any thing in his works was able to raise.

It is certain that some of the greatest names of antiquity have distinguished themselves by the high reverence they shewed to the poetical character. Scipio, you may remember, desired to be laid in the same tomb with Ennius; and I am inclined to pardon that successful madman Alexander many of his extravagancies, for the generous regard he paid to the memory of Pindar, at the sacking of Thebes.

There seems, indeed, to be something in poetry, that raises the possessors of that very singular talent, far higher in the estimation of the world in general, than those who excel in any other of the refined arts. And accordingly we find that poets have been distinguished by antiquity with the most remarkable honours. Thus Homer, we are told, was deified at Smyrna; as the citizens of Mytilene stamped the image of Sappho

upon their public coin: Anacreon received a solemn invitation to spend his days at Athens; and Hipparchus, the son of Pisistratus, fitted out a splendid vessel in order to transport him thither: and when Virgil came into the theatre at Rome, the whole audience rose up and saluted him with the same respect as they would have paid to Augustus himself.

Painting, one should imagine, has the fairest pretensions of rivalling her sister-art in the number of admirers; and yet, where Apelles is mentioned once, Homer is celebrated a thousand times. Nor can this be accounted for by urging that the works of the latter are still extant, while those of the former have perished long since: for is not Milton's *Paradise Lost* more universally esteemed than Raphael's cartoons?

The truth, I imagine, is, there are more who are natural judges of the harmony of numbers, than of the grace of proportions. One meets with but few who have not, in some degree at least, a tolerable ear, but a judicious eye is a far more uncommon possession. For as words are the universal medium which all men employ in order to convey their sentiments to each other; it seems a just consequence that they should be more generally formed for relishing and judging of performances in that way: whereas the art of representing ideas by means of lines and colours, lies more out of the road of common use, and is therefore less adapted to the taste of the general run of mankind.

I hazard this observation, in the hopes of drawing from you your sentiments upon a subject, in which no man is more qualified to decide; as indeed it is to the conversation of Orontes that I am indebted for the discovery of many refined delicacies in the imitative arts, which, without his judicious assistance, would have lain concealed to me with other common observers. Adieu. I am, &c,

LETTER LIV.

TO PHIDIPPUS.

I AM by no means surprized that the interview you have lately had with Cleanthes, has given you a much lower opinion of his abilities, than what you had before conceived: and since it has

raised your curiosity to know my sentiments of his character, you shall have them with all that freedom you may justly expect.

I have always, then, considered Cleanthes

anthes as possessed of the most extraordinary talents: but his talents are of a kind, which can only be exerted upon uncommon occasions. They are formed for the greatest depth of business and affairs; but absolutely out of all size for the shallows of ordinary life. In circumstances that require the most profound reasonings, in incidents that demand the most penetrating politics; there Cleanthes would shine with supreme lustre. But view him in any situation inferior to these; place him where he cannot raise admiration, and he will most probably sink into contempt. Cleanthes, in short, wants nothing but the addition of certain minute accomplishments, to render him a finished character: but being wholly destitute of those little talents which are necessary to render a man useful or agreeable in the daily commerce of the world, those great abilities which he possesses lie unobserved or neglected.

He often, indeed, gives one occasion to reflect how necessary it is to be master of a sort of under-qualities, in order to set off and recommend those of a superior nature. To know how to descend with grace and ease into ordinary occasions, and to fall in with the less important parties and purposes of mankind, is an art of more general influence, perhaps, than is usually imagined.

If I were to form, therefore, a youth for the world, I should certainly endeavour to cultivate in him these secondary qualifications; and train him up to an address in those lower arts, which render a man agreeable in conversation, or useful to the innocent pleasures and accommodations of life. A general skill and taste of this kind with moderate abilities will, in most instances, I believe, prove more successful in the world, than a much higher degree of capacity without them. I am, &c.

LETTER LV.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

JULY 17, 1730.

IF the temper and turn of Timanthes had not long prepared me for what has happened, I should have received your account of his death with more surprise; but I suspected, from our earliest acquaintance, that his sentiments and disposition would lead him into a satiety of life, much sooner than nature would probably carry him to the end of it. When unsettled principles fall in with a constitutional gloominess of mind, it is no wonder the *tedium vite* should gain daily strength, till it pushes a man to seek relief against this most desperate of all distempers, from the point of a sword, or the bottom of a river.

But to learn to accommodate our taste to that portion of happiness which Providence has set before us, is, of all the lessons of philosophy, surely the most necessary. High and exquisite gratifications are not consistent with the appointed measures of humanity: and, perhaps, if we would fully enjoy the relish of our being, we should rather consider the misery we escape, than too nicely examine the intrinsic worth of the happiness we possess. It is, at least, the business of true wisdom to bring together every cir-

cumstance which may light up a flame of cheerfulness in the mind: and though we must be insensible if it should perpetually burn with the same unvaried brightness; yet prudence should preserve it as a sacred fire, which is never to be totally extinguished.

I am persuaded, this disgust of life is frequently indulged out of a principle of mere vanity: It is esteemed as a mark of uncommon refinement, and as placing a man above the ordinary level of his species, to seem superior to the vulgar feelings of happiness. True good-sense, however, most certainly consists, not in despising, but in managing, our stock of life to the best advantage; as a cheerful acquiescence in the measures of Providence, is one of the strongest symptoms of a well-constituted mind. Self-weariness is a circumstance that ever attends folly; and to condemn our being, is the greatest, and, indeed, the peculiar infirmity of human nature. It is a noble sentiment which Tully puts into the mouth of Cato, in his treatise upon old age—*Non lubet mihi, says that venerable Roman, deplorare vitam, quod multi, et ii docti, sse fecerunt; neque*

*me vixisse pœnitet: quoniam ita vixi,
ut non frustra me natum existimem.*

It is in the power, indeed, of but a very small proportion of mankind, to act the same glorious part that afforded such high satisfaction to this distinguished patriot: but the number is yet far more inconsiderable of those, who cannot, in any station, secure to themselves a sufficient fund of complacency to render life justly valuable. Who is it that is placed out of the reach of the highest of all gratifications, those of the generous affections; and that cannot provide for his own happiness by contributing something to the welfare of others? As this disease of the mind generally breaks out with most violence in those who are supposed to be endowed with a greater delicacy of taste and reason than is the usual allotment of their fellow-creatures, one may ask them; whether there is any satiety in the pursuits of useful knowledge? or, if one can ever be weary of benefiting mankind? Will not the fine

arts supply a lasting feast to the mind? Or can there be wanting a pleasurable employment, so long as here remains even one advantageous truth to be discovered or confirmed? To complain that life has no joys, while there is a single creature whom we can relieve by our bounty, assist by our counsels, or enliven by our presence, is to lament the loss of that which we possess, and is just as rational as to die of thirst with the cup in our hands. But the misfortune is, when a man is settled into a habit of receiving all his pleasures from the mere selfish indulgencies; he wears out of his mind the relish of every nobler enjoyment, at the same time that his powers of the sensual kind are growing more languid by each repetition. It is no wonder, therefore, he should fill up the measures of his gratifications, long before he has completed the circle of his duration; and either wretchedly sit down the remainder of his days in discontent, or rashly throw them up in despair. Farewel. I am, &c.

LETTER LVI.

TO TIMOCLEA.

OCTOBER 1, 1743.

CERTAINLY, Timoclea, you have a passion for the marvellous beyond all power of gratification. There is not an adventurer throughout the whole regions of chivalry, with whom you are unacquainted; and have wandered through more folios than would furnish out a decent library. Mine, at least, you have totally exhausted; and have so cleared my shelves of knight-errant, that I have not a single hero remaining that ever was regaled in bower or hall. But though you have drained me of my whole stock of Romance, I am not entirely unprovided for your entertainment; and have enclosed a little Grecian fable for your amusement, which was lately transmitted to me by one of my friends. He discovered it, he tells me, among some old manuscripts, which have been long, it seems, in the possession of his family: and, if you will rely upon his judgment, it is a translation by Spenser's own hand.

This is all the history I have to give you of the following piece: the *genuineness* of which I leave to be settled

between my friend and the critics; and am, &c.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LYCON AND EUPHORMIUS.

I.

DEEM not, ye plaintive crew, that suffer wrong,

Ne thou, O man! who deal'st the tort,
misween

The equal gods, who heav'n's sky mansions
throng,

(Though viewless to the eyne they distant
sheen)

Spectators reckless of our actions been.

Turning the volume of grave fables old,
Where ancient fables in fable may be seen,
This truth I fond in paynim tale enroll'd,
Which for ensample drad my Muse shall here
unfold.

II.

What time Areadia's flowret vallies fam'd
Pelagius, first of monarchs old, obey'd,
There wond' a wight, and Lycon was he
nam'd,

Unaw'd by conscience, of no gods afraid,
Ne justice rul'd his heart, ne mercy sway'd.
Some

Some held him kin to that abhorred race,
Which heav'n's high tow'rs with mad em-
prise assay'd;
And some his cruel lynage did y'trace
From fell Erynnis join'd in Pluto's dire em-
brace.

III.

But he, perdy, far other tale did feign,
And claim'd alliance with the Sisters nine;
And deem'd himself (what deems not pride
so vain?)

The peerless paragon of wit divine,
Vaunting that ev'ry foe should rue it's time.
Right doughty wight! yet, sooth, withouten
smart,

All pow'rless fell the losels shafts malign:
'Tis virtue's arm to wield wit's heav'nly dart,
Point it's keen barb with force, and send it
to the heart.

IV.

One only impe he had, Pastora hight,
Whose sweet amenaunce pleas'd each shep-
herd's eye:

Yet pleas'd the not base Lycon's evil spright,
Tho' blame in her not malice moten 'spy,
Clear, without spot, as summer's cloudless
sky.

Hence poets feign'd, Lycean Pan array'd
In Lycon's form, enflam'd with passion
high,

Deceiv'd her mother in the covert glade;
And from the stol'n embrace ysprong the
heav'nly maid.

V.

Thus fab'ling they: meanwhile the damsel
fair.

A shepherd youth remark'd, as o'er the
plain

She demfly pac'd along so debonaire:
Seem'd she as one of Dian's chosen train.

Full many a fond excuse he knew to feign,
In sweet converse to while with her the day,
'Till love unwares his heedless heart did
gain.

Nor dempt he, simple wight, no mortal may
The blinded God once harbour'd, when he
list, forefay.

VI.

Now much he meditates if yet to speak,
And now resolves his passion to conceal:

But sure, quoth he, my feely heart will break
If aye I smother what I aye must feel.

At length by hope embolden'd to reveal,
The lab'ring secret dropped from his tong.

Whiles frequent singults check'd his salt-
ring tale,

In modest wile her head Pastora hong:
For never maid more chaste inspired shep-
herd's song.

VII.

What needs me to recount in long detail
The tender parley which these lemans held?

How oft he vow'd his love her ne'er should
fail;

How oft the stream from forth her cynos
outwell'd,

Doubting if constancy yet ever dwell'd

In heart of youthful wight: suffice to know,

Each rising doubt he in her bosome quell'd.

So parted they, more blisshome both, I trow;

For rankling love conceal'd, me seems, is
deadly woe.

VIII.

Effsoons to Lycon swift the youth did fare,
(Lagg'd ever youth when Cupid urg'd his
way?)

And straight his gentle purpose did declare,
And sooth the mouat'naunce of his herds
display.

Ne Lycon meant his suten to forefay:

'Be thine Pastora,' quoth the masker sly,

'And twice two thousand sheep her dow'r

shall pay.

Beat then the lover's heart with joyaunce high;

Ne dempt that aught his blis could now

betray,

Ne guess'd that foul deceit in Lycon's bosome
lay.

IX.

So forth he yode to seek his rev'rend fire;

(The good Euphormius shepherds him did
call)

How sweet Pastora did his bosome fire,

Her worth, her promis'd flocks, he tolden
all.

'Ah! nere, my son, let Lycon thee e-

thrall,

Reply'd the sage, in wise experience old,

'Smooth is his tong, but full of guile

withal,

'In promise faithless, and in vaunting bold:

'Ne ever lamb of his will bleat within thy
fold.'

X.

With words prophetic thus Euphormius spake:

And fact confirm'd what wisdom thus fore-
told.

Full many a mean devise did Lycon make,

The hoped day of spousal to with-hold,

Framing new trains when nought mote
serve his old.

Nath'less he vow'd, Cyllene, cloud-topt hill,

Should sooner down the lowly delve be
roll'd,

Than he his plightd promise nould fulfill:

But when, perdy, or where, the captive sayen
nill.

XI.

Whiles thus the tedious suns had journey'd
round,

Ne ought mote now the lovers hearts divide,

Ne trust was there, ne truth in Lycon found;

The maid with matron Juno for her guide,

The youth by Concord led, in secret by'd

To Hymen's sacred fane; The honest deed
Each god approv'd, and close the bands
were ty'd.

Certes, till happier moments should succeed,
No prying eyne they ween'd their emprise
mote areed.

XII.

But prying eyne of Lycon 'twas in vain
(Right practick in disguise) to hope beware.
He trac'd their covert steps to Hymen's fane,
And joy'd to find them in his long laid
snare.

Alcates, in semblaunt ire, he 'gan to swear,
And roaren loud as in displeasance high;
Then out he hurlen forth his daughter fair,
Forelore the houseless child of misery,
Expos'd to killing cold, and pinching penury.

XIII.

Ah! whither now shall sad Pastora wend,
To want abandon'd and by wrongs oppress?
Who shall the wretched out-cast's teen be-
friend?
Lives mercy then, if not in parent's breast?
Yes, MEAGRE lives, the gentle goddess blest.
At Jove's right hand, to Jove for ever dear.
Aye at his feet the pleads the cause distressed,
To sorrow's plaints she turns his equal ear,
And wails to heav'n's star-throne fair virtue's
silent tear.

XIV.

'Twas SHE that bade Euphormius quell
each thought
That well mote rise to check his gen'rous
aid.
Tho' high the torts which Lycon him had
wrought,
Tho' few the flocks his humble pastures fed;
When as he learn'd Pastora's hapless sted,
His breast humane with wonted pity flows:
He op'd his gates, the naked exile led
Beneath his roof; a decent drapet throws
O'er her cold limbs, and sooths her unde-
seryed woes.

XV.

Now loud-tongue'd Rumour bruited round
the tale:
Th' astoned swains uneath could credence
give,
That in Arcadia's unambitious vale
A fautor false as Lycon e'er did live.
But Jove (who in high heav'n does mortals
pryve,
And ev'ry deed in golden ballance weighs)
To earth his flaming chariot baden drive,
And down descends, enwrapt in peerless
blaze,
To deal forth guerdon meet to good and evil
ways.

XVI.

Where Eruymanthus, crown'd with many a
wood.

His silver stream through dasy'd vales does
lead,

Stretch'd on the flow'ry marge, in reckless
mood,

Proud Lycon fought by charm of jocund
reed

To lull the dire terror of tortious deed.

Him Jove accosts, in rev'rend semblaunce
dight

Of good Euphormius, and 'gan mild areed

Of compact oft-confirm'd, of fay yplight,
Of nature's tender tie, of sacred rule of right.

XVII.

With lofty eyne, half loth to looke so low,
Him Lycon yiew'd, and with swol'n sur-
quedry

'Gan rudely treat his sacred old: when now
Forth stood the God confest that rules the
sky,

In sudden sheen of drad divinity—

'And know, false man,' the Lord of
thunders said,

'Not unobscerv'd by Heav'n's all-present eye

'Thy cruel deeds: nor shall be unappoy'd:

'Go! be in form that best befits thy
'thews, array'd.'

XVIII.

Whiles yet he spake, th' affrayed, trembling
wight

Trahmew'd to blatant beast, with hideous
howl

Rush'd headlong forth, in well-deserved
plight,

'Midst dragons, minotaurs, and fiends to
prewl,

A wolf in form as erst a wolf in soul!

To Pholoe, forest wild, he hy'd away,

The horrid haunt of savage monsters foul,

There helpless innocence is still his prey,

Thief of the bleating fold, and shepherd's
dire dismay.

XIX.

Tho' Jove to good Euphormius eot did wend,
Where peaceful dwelt the man of virtue
high,

Each shepherd's praise and eke each shep-
herd's friend,

In ev'ry act of sweet humanity,

Him Jove approaching in mild majesty,

Greeted all hail! then bade him join the
throng

Of gilt'rand lights that gild the glowing sky.

There shepherds nightly view his orb
yhong,

Where bright he shines eterne, the brightest
stars among.



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LETTER LVII.

TO CLYTANDER.

FEBRUARY 8, 1739.

IF there was any thing in my former letter inconsistent with that esteem which is justly due to the Ancients, I desire to retract it in this; and disavow every expression which might seem to give precedence to the moderns in works of genius. I am so far indeed from entertaining the sentiments you impute to me, that I have often endeavoured to account for that superiority which is so visible in the composition of their poets: and have frequently assigned their religion as in the number of those causes, which probably concurred to give them this remarkable preheminance. That enthusiasm which is so essential to every true artist in the poetical way, was considerably heightened and enflamed by the whole turn of their sacred doctrines; and the fancied presence of their Muses had almost as wonderful an effect upon their thoughts and language, as if they had been really and divinely inspired. Whilst all nature was supposed to swarm with divinities, and every oak and fountain was believed to be the residence of some presiding deity; what wonder if the poet was animated by the imagined influence of such exalted society, and found himself transported beyond the ordinary limits of sober humanity? The mind, when attended only by mere mortals of superior powers, is observed to rise in her strength; and her faculties open and enlarge themselves when she acts in the view of those for whom she has conceived a more than common reverence. But when the force of superstition moves in concert with the powers of imagination, and genius is enflamed by devotion, poetry must shine out in all her brightest perfection and splendor.

Whatever therefore the philosopher might think of the religion of his country, it was the interest of the poet to be thoroughly orthodox. If he gave up his creed, he must renounce his numbers; and there could be no inspiration where there were no Muses. This is so true, that it is in compositions in the poetical kind alone that the ancients seem to have the principal advantage over the mo-

derns: in every other species of writing one might venture perhaps to assert that these latter ages have, at least, equalled them. When I say so, I do not confine myself to the productions of our own nation, but comprehend likewise those of our neighbours: and with that extent the observation will possibly hold true, even without an exception in favour of history and oratory.

But whatever may with justice be determined concerning that question, it is certain, at least, that the practice of all succeeding poets confirms the notion for which I am principally contending. Though the altars of paganism have many ages since been thrown down, and groves are no longer sacred; yet the language of the poets has not changed with the religion of the times, but the gods of Greece and Rome are still adored in modern verse. Is not this a confession, that fancy is enlivened by superstition, and that the ancient bards caught their rapture from the old mythology? I will own, however, that I think there is something ridiculous in this unnatural adoption, and that a modern poet makes but an awkward figure with his antiquated gods. When the pagan system was sanctified by popular belief, a piece of machinery of that kind, as it had the air of probability, afforded a very striking manner of celebrating any remarkable circumstance, or raising any common one. But now that this superstition is no longer supported by vulgar opinion, it has lost its principal grace and efficacy, and seems to be, in general, the most cold and uninteresting method in which a poet can work up his sentiments. What, for instance, can be more unaffecting and spiritless, than the compliment which Boileau has paid to Louis the XIVth, on his famous passage over the Rhine? He represents the Naiads, you may remember, as alarming the god of that river with an account of the march of the French monarch; upon which the river-god assumes the appearance of an old experienced commander, and flies to a Dutch fort, in order to exhort the garrison to sally out

and dispute the intended passage. Accordingly they range themselves in form of battle with the Rhine at their head, who, after some vain efforts, observing Mars and Bellona on the side of the enemy, is so terrified with the view of those superior divinities, that he most gallantly runs away, and leaves the hero in quiet possession of his banks. I know not how far this may be relished by critics, or justified by custom; but as I am only mentioning my particular taste, I will acknowledge, that it appears to me extremely insipid and puerile.

I have not however so much of the spirit of Typhoeus in me, as to make war upon the gods without restriction, and attempt to exclude them from their whole poetical dominions. To represent natural, moral, or intellectual qualities and affections as persons, and appropriate to them those general emblems by which their powers and properties are usually typified in pagan theology, may be allowed as one of the most pleasing and graceful figures of poetical rhetoric. When Dryden, addressing himself to the month of May as to a person, says—

For thee the Graces lead the dancing hours;

one may consider him as speaking only in metaphor: and when such shadowy beings are thus just shewn to the imagination, and immediately withdrawn again, they certainly have a very powerful effect. But I can relish them no farther than as figures only: when they are extended in any serious composition beyond the limits of metaphor, and exhibited under all the various actions of real persons, I cannot but consider them as so many absurdities, which custom has unreasonably authorized. Thus Spenser, in one of his pastorals, represents the god of Love as flying, like a bird, from bough to bough. A shepherd, who hears a rustling among the

bushes, supposes it to be some game, and accordingly discharges his bow. Cupid returns the shot, and after several arrows had been mutually exchanged between them, the unfortunate swain discovers whom it is he is contending with: but as he is endeavouring to make his escape, receives a desperate wound in the heel. This fiction makes the subject of a very pretty idyllium in one of the Greek poets; yet is extremely flat and disgusting as it is adopted by our British bard. And the reason of the difference is plain: in the former it is supported by a popular superstition; whereas no strain of imagination can give it the least air of probability, as it is worked up by the latter:

Quodcumque mihi ostendis sic, incredulus ed.

Hor.

I must confess, at the same time, that the inimitable Prior has introduced this fabulous scheme with such uncommon grace, and has paid so many genteel compliments to his mistress by the assistance of Venus and Cupid, that one is carried off from observing the impropriety of this machinery, by the pleasing address with which he manages it: and I never read his tender poems of this kind, without applying to him what Seneca somewhere says upon a similar occasion: *Major ille est qui judicium abstulit, quam qui meruit.*

To speak my sentiments in one word, I would leave the gods in full possession of allegorical and burlesque poems: in all others I would never suffer them to make their appearance in person and as agents, but to enter only in simile, or allusion. It is thus Waller, of all our poets, has most happily employed them: and his application of the story of Daphne and Apollo will serve as an instance, in what manner the ancient mythology may be adopted with the utmost propriety and beauty. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER LVIII.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

AUGUST 8, 1741.

I know not in what disposition of mind this letter may find you; but I am sure you will not preserve your usual cheerfulness of temper when I tell you that poor Hydaspes died last night.

I will not at this time attempt to offer that consolation to you, of which I stand in so much need myself. But may it not somewhat abate the anxiety of our mutual grief, to reflect, that how-

ever

ever considerable our own loss is, yet with respect to himself, it scarce deserves to be lamented that he arrived so much earlier at the grave than his years and his health seemed to promise? For who, my friend, that has any experience of the world, would wish to extend his duration to old age? What indeed is length of days, but to survive all one's enjoyments, and, perhaps, to survive even one's very self? I have somewhere met with an ancient inscription founded upon this sentiment, which infinitely pleased me. It was fixed upon a bath, and contained an imprecation, in the following terms, against any one who should attempt to remove the building:

QUISQVIS, HOC. SVTVLERIT.
AVT. IVSERIT.
VLTIMVS SVORVM. MORIATVR.

The thought is conceived with great delicacy and justness; as there cannot, perhaps, be a sharper calamity to a generous mind: than to see itself stand single amidst the ruins of whatever rendered the world most desirable.

Instances of this sort I am lamenting, while the impressions remain fresh upon the mind; are sufficient to damp the gayest hopes, and chill the warmest am-

bition. When one sees a person in the full bloom of life, thus destroyed by one sudden blast, one cannot but consider all the distant schemes of mankind as the highest folly.

It is amazing indeed that a creature such as man, with so many memorials around him of the shortness of his duration, and who cannot ensure to himself even the next moment, should yet plan designs which run far into futurity. The business however of life must be carried on, and it is necessary for the purposes of human affairs, that mankind should resolutely act upon very precarious contingencies. Too much reflection, therefore, is as inconsistent with the appointed measures of our station, as too little; and there cannot be a less desirable turn of mind, than one that is influenced by an over-refined philosophy. At least it is by considerations of this sort, that I endeavour to call off my thoughts from pursuing too earnestly those reasonings, which the occasion of this letter is apt to suggest. This use, however, one may justly make of the present accident, that whilst it contracts the circle of friendship, it should render it so much the more valuable to us who yet walk within its limits. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER LIX.

TO HORTENSIVS.

MAY 4, 1740.

IF the ingenious piece you communicated to me, requires any farther touches of your pencil; I must acknowledge the truth to be, what you are inclined to suspect, that my friendship has imposed upon my judgment. But though in the present instance your delicacy seems far too refined, yet, in general, I must agree with you, that works of the most permanent kind are not the effects of a lucky moment, nor struck out at a single heat. The best performances, indeed, have generally cost the most labour; and that ease, which is so essential to fine writing, has seldom been attained without repeated and severe corrections: *Ludentis speciem dabit et torquetur*, is a motto that may be applied, I believe, to most successful authors of genius. With as much facility as the numbers of the natural Prior seem to have flowed from him, they were the

result (if I am not misinformed). of much application: and a friend of mine, who undertook to transcribe one of the noblest performances of the finest genius that this, or perhaps any age can boast, has often assured me, that there is not a single line, as it is now published, which stands in conformity with the original manuscript. The truth is, every sentiment has its peculiar expression, and every word its precise place, which do not always immediately present themselves, and generally demand frequent trials before they can be properly adjusted: not to mention the more important difficulties, which necessarily occur in settling the plan and regulating the higher parts which compose the structure of a finished work.

Those, indeed, who know what pangs it cost even the most fertile genius to be delivered of a just and regular production,

tion might be inclined, perhaps, to cry out with the most antient of authors—*'Ob! that mine adversary had written a book!'* A writer of refined taste has the continual mortification to find himself incapable of taking entire possession of that ideal beauty which warms and fills his imagination. His conceptions still rise above all the powers of his art, and he can but faintly copy out those images of perfection which are impressed upon his mind. 'Never was any thing,' says Tully, 'more beautiful than the Venus of Apelles, or the Jove of Phidias; yet were they by no means equal to those high notions of beauty which animated the geniuses of those wonderful artists.' In the same manner, he observes, the great masters of oratory imaged to themselves a certain perfection of eloquence, which they could only contemplate in idea, but in vain attempted to draw out in expression. Perhaps no author ever perpetuated his reputation, who could write up to the full standard of his own judgment: and I am persuaded that he, who upon a survey of his compositions can without entire complacency pronounce them good, will hardly find the world join with him in the same favourable sentence.

The most judicious of all poets, the inimitable Virgil, used to resemble his productions to those of that animal who, agreeably to the notions of the antients, was supposed to bring her young into the world a mere rude and shapeless mass: he was obliged to retouch them again and again, he acknowledged, before they acquired their proper form and beauty. Accordingly we are told, that after having spent eleven years in composing his *Æneid*, he intended to have set apart three more for the revival of that glorious performance. But being prevented by his last sickness from giving those finishing touches which his ex-

quisite judgment conceived to be still necessary, he directed his friends Tucca and Varius to burn the noblest poem that ever appeared in the Roman language. In the same spirit of delicacy Mr. Dryden tells us, that had he taken more time in translating this author, he might possibly have succeeded better; but never, he assures us, could he have succeeded so well as to have satisfied himself.

In a word, Hortensius, I agree with you, that there is nothing more difficult than to fill up the character of an author who proposes to raise a just and lasting admiration; who is not contented with those little transient flashes of applause which attend the ordinary race of writers, but considers only how he may shine out to posterity; who extends his views beyond the present generation, and cultivates those productions which are to flourish in future ages. What Sir William Temple observes of poetry, may be applied to every other work where taste and imagination are concerned: 'It requires the greatest contraries to compose it; a genius both penetrating and solid; an expression both strong and delicate. There must be a great agitation of mind to invent, a great calm to judge and correct: there must be upon the same tree, and at the same time, both flower and fruit.' But though, I know, you would not value yourself upon any performance, wherein these very opposite and very singular qualities were not conspicuous; yet I must remind you at the same time, that when the file ceases to polish, it must necessarily weaken. You will remember therefore, that there is a medium between the immoderate caution of that orator, who was three olympiads in writing a single oration; and the extravagant expedition of that poet, whose funeral pile was composed of his own numberless productions. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER LX.

TO PALEMON.

MAY 28, 1739.

I Write this while Cleora is angling by my side, under the shade of a spreading elm that hangs over the banks of our river. A nightingale, more harmonious even than Strada's, is serenading us from a hawthorn bush which

smiles with all the gaiety of youth and beauty; while

Gentle gales,
Fanning their odorous wings, disperse
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils.

MILT.
Whilst

Whilst I am thus enjoying the innocent luxury of this vernal delight, I look back upon those scenes of turbulence, wherein I was once engaged, with more than ordinary distaste; and despise myself for ever having entertained so mean a thought as to be rich and great. One of our monarchs used to say, That he looked upon those to be the happiest men in the nation, whose fortune had placed them in the country, above a high-constable, and below the trouble of a justice of peace. It is in a mediocrity of this happy kind that I here pass my life: with a fortune far above the necessity of engaging in the drudgery of business, and with desires much too humble to have any relish for the splendid baits of ambition.

You must not, however, imagine that I affect the Stoic, or pretend to have eradicated all my passions: the sum of my philosophy amounts to no more than to cherish none but such as I may easily

and innocently gratify, and to banish all the rest as so many bold intruders upon my repose. I endeavour to practise the maxim of a French poet, by considering every thing that is not within my possession, as not worth having.

*Pour m'assurer le seul bien
Que l'on doit estimer au monde,
Tout ce que je n'ai pas, je le compte pour rien.*

Is it not possible, Palemon, to reconcile you to these unambitious sentiments, and to lower your sight to the humble level of genuine happiness? Let me at least prevail with you to spare a day or two from the *certamina devotiarum*, (as Horace I think calls them) from those splendid contests in which you are engaged, just to take a view of the sort of life we lead in the country. If there is any thing wanting to complete the happiness I here find, it is that you are so seldom a witness to it. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER LXI.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

JULY 3, 1744.

THE beauties of style seem to be generally considered as below the attention both of an author and a reader. I know not, therefore, whether I may venture to acknowledge, that among the numberless graces of your late performance, I particularly admired that strength and elegance with which you have enforced and adorned the noblest sentiments.

There was a time however (and it was a period of the truest refinements) when an excellence of this kind was esteemed in the number of the politest accomplishments; as it was the ambition of some of the greatest names of antiquity to distinguish themselves in the improvements of their native tongue. Julius Cæsar, who was not only the greatest hero, but the finest gentleman that ever, perhaps, appeared in the world, was desirous of adding this talent to his other most shining endowments: and we are told he studied the language of his country with much application; as we are sure he possessed it in it's highest elegance. What a loss, Euphronius, is it to the literary world, that the treatise which

he wrote upon this subject, is perished with many other valuable works of that age? But though we are deprived of the benefit of his observations, we are happily not without an instance of their effects; and his own memoirs will ever remain as the best and brightest exemplar, not only of true generalship, but of fine writing. He published them, indeed, only as materials for the use of those who should be disposed to enlarge upon that remarkable period of the Roman story; yet the purity and gracefulness of his style were such, that no judicious writer durst attempt to touch the subject after him.

Having produced so illustrious an instance in favour of an art, for which I have ventured to admire you; it would be impertinent to add a second, were I to cite a less authority than that of the immortal Tully. This noble author, in his dialogue concerning the celebrated Roman orators, frequently mentions it as a very high encomium, that they possessed the elegance of their native language; and introduces Brutus as declaring, that he should prefer the honour

nour of being esteemed the great master and improver of Roman eloquence, even to the glory of many triumphs.

But to add reason to precedent, and to view this art in it's use as well as it's dignity; will it not be allowed of some importance, when it is considered, that eloquence is one of the most considerable auxiliaries of truth? Nothing indeed contributes more to subdue the mind to the force of reason, than her being supported by the powerful assistance of masculine and vigorous oratory. As on the contrary the most legitimate arguments may be disappointed of that success they deserve, by being attended with a spiritless and enfeebled expression. Accordingly, that most elegant of writers, the inimitable Mr. Addison, observes, in one of his essays, that there is as much difference between comprehending a thought clothed in Cicero's language and that of an ordinary writer, as between seeing an object by the light of a taper and the light of the sun.

It is surely then a very strange conceit of the celebrated Malbranche, who seems to think the pleasure which arises from perusing a well written piece, is of the criminal kind, and has it's source in the weakness and effeminacy of the human heart. A man must have a very uncommon severity of temper indeed, who can find any thing to condemn in adding charms to truth, and gaining the heart by captivating the ear; in uniting roses with the thorns of science, and joining pleasure with instruction.

The truth is, the mind is delighted

with a fine style, upon the same principle that it prefers regularity to confusion, and beauty to deformity. A taste of this sort is indeed so far from being a mark of any depravity of our nature, that I should rather consider it as an evidence, in some degree, of the moral rectitude of it's constitution, as it is a proof of it's retaining some relish at least of harmony and order.

One might be apt indeed to suspect that certain writers amongst us had considered all beauties of this sort in the same gloomy view with Malbranche; or at least that they avoided every refinement in style, as unworthy a lover of truth and philosophy. Their sentiments are sunk by the lowest expressions, and seem condemned to the first curse, of *creeping upon the ground all the days of their life*. Others, on the contrary, mistake pomp for dignity; and, in order to raise their expressions above vulgar language, lift them up beyond common apprehensions, esteeming it (one should imagine) a mark of their genius, that it requires some ingenuity to penetrate their meaning. But how few writers, like Euphronius, know to hit that true medium which lies between those distant extremes? How seldom do we meet with an author, whose expressions, like those of my friend, are glowing, but not glaring; whose metaphors are natural, but not common; whose periods are harmonious, but not poetical; in a word, whose sentiments are *well set*, and shewn to the understanding in their truest and most advantageous lustre. I am, &c.

LETTER LXII.

TO ORONTES.

I Intended to have closed with your proposal, and passed a few weeks with you at ***; but some unlucky affairs have intervened, which will engage me, I fear, the remaining part of this season.

Among the amusements which the scene you are in affords, I should have esteemed the conversation of Timoclea as a very principal entertainment; and as I know you are fond of singular characters, I recommend that lady to your acquaintance.

Timoclea was once a beauty; but ill health, and worse fortune, have ruined those charms which time would yet have spared. However, what has spoiled her for a mistress, has improved her as a companion; and she is far more conversable now, as she has much less beauty, than when I used to see her once a week triumphing in the drawing-room. For, as few women (whatever they may pretend) will value themselves upon their minds, while they can gain admirers by their persons, Timoclea ne-

ver

verthought of charming by her wit, till she had no chance of making conquests by her beauty. She has been a good deal of the world, and of the best company in it, as it is from thence she has derived whatever knowledge she possesses. You cannot, indeed, flatter her more, than by seeming to consider her as fond of reading and retirement. But the truth is, nature formed her for the joys of society, and she is never so thoroughly pleased as when she has a circle round her.

It is upon those occasions she appears to full advantage; as I never knew any person who was endued with the talents for conversation to a higher degree. If I were disposed to write the characters of the age, Timoclea is the first person in the world to whose assistance I should apply. She has the happiest art of marking out the distinguishing cast of her acquaintance that I ever met with; and I have known her, in an afternoon's conversation, paint the manners with greater delicacy of judgment and strength

of colouring, than is to be found either in Theophrastus or Bruyere.

She has an inexhaustible fund of wit; but if I may venture to distinguish, where one knows not even how to define, I should say, it is rather brilliant than strong. This talent renders her the terror of all her female acquaintance; yet she never sacrificed the absent, or mortified the present, merely for the sake of displaying the force of her satire: if any feel it's sting, it is those only who first provoke it. Still however it must be owned, that her resentments are frequently without just foundation, and almost always beyond measure. But though she has much warmth, she has great generosity in her temper; and with all her faults she is well worth your knowing.

And now, having given you this general plan of the strength and weakness of the place, I leave you to make your approaches as you shall see proper. I am, &c.

LETTER LXIII.

TO THE SAME.

I Look upon verbal criticism, as it is generally exercised, to be no better than a sort of learned legerdemain, by which the sense or nonsense of a passage is artfully conveyed away, and some other introduced in its stead, as best suits with the purpose of the profound juggler. The dissertation you recommended to my perusal has but served to confirm me in these sentiments: for though I admired the ingenuity of the artist, I could not but greatly suspect the justness of an art, which can thus press any author into the service of any hypothesis.

I have sometimes amused myself with considering the entertainment it would afford to those antients, whose works have had the honour to be attended by our commentators, could they rise out of their sepulchres, and peruse some of those curious conjectures that have been raised upon their respective compositions. Were Horace, for instance, to read over only a few of those numberless restorers of his text, and expositors of his meaning, that have infested the republic of letters; what a fund of pleasantry might

he extract for a satire on critical erudition! how many harmless words would he see cruelly banished from their rightful possessions, merely because they happened to disturb some unmerciful philologist? On the other hand, he would undoubtedly smile at that penetrating sagacity, which has discovered meanings which never entered into his thoughts, and found out concealed allusions in his most plain and artless expressions.

One could not, I think, set the general absurdity of critical conjectures in a stronger light, than by applying them to something parallel in our own writers. If the English tongue should ever become a dead language, and our best authors be raised into the rank of classic writers; much of the force and propriety of their expressions, especially of such as turned upon humour, or alluded to any manners peculiar to the age, would inevitably be lost, or, at best, would be extremely doubtful. How would it puzzle, for instance, future commentators to explain Swift's epigram upon our musical contests? I imagine one might find them defining upon

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upon

upon that little humorous fally of our English Rabelais, in some such manner as this—

EPIGRAM
ON THE FEUDS BETWEEN HANDEL AND BONONCINI.

Strange all this difference should be
Twist Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee!

NOTES OF VARIOUS AUTHORS.

TWEEDLE-dum and Tweedle-dee.] I am persuaded the poet gave it *Tweedle drum* and *Tweedle key*. To *tweedle* signifies to make a certain ridiculous motion with the fingers: what word, therefore, could be more proper to express this epigram-writer's contempt of the performances of those musicians, and of the folly of his contemporaries in running into parties upon so absurd an occasion? The *drum* was a certain martial instrument used in those times; as the word *key* is a technical term in music, importing the fundamental note which regulates the whole composition. It means also those little pieces of wood which the fingers strike against in an organ, &c. in order to make the instrument sound. The alteration here proposed is so *obvious* and *natural*, that I am surprised none of the commentators hit upon it before. L. C. D.

Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee.] These words have greatly embarrassed the critics, who are extremely expert in finding a difficulty where there is none. *Tweedle-dum* and *Tweedle-dee* are *most undoubtedly* the names of the two musicians: and though they are filled by different appellations in the title of this epigram, yet that is *no objection*; for it is well known that persons in those times had more surnames than one. S. M.—Absurd! here is evidently an error of the press, for there is not a single hint in all antiquity of the family of the *Tweedle-dums* and *Tweedle-dees*. The learned S. M. therefore nodded when he undertook to explain this passage. The sense will be very plain if we read with a little alteration. *Wbeedle Tom* and *Waddle THE*; *THE* being a known contraction for Theodore, as *Tom* is for

Thomas. *Waddle* and *Wbeedle* are likewise classical words. Thus Pope—

As when a dab chick *waddles* thro' the copse,
Dun. ii. 59.

Obliquely *waddling* to the mark in view.
Ib. ii. 150.

And though indeed I do not recollect to have met with the verb *to wbeedle*, in any pure author, yet it is *plain* that it was in use, since we find the participle *wbeedling* in an ancient tragedy composed about these times—

And laughing, toying, *wbeedling*, whimp'ring
the,
Will make him amble on a gossip's message,
And hold the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules. JANE SHORT.

Thomas and Theodore, therefore, were *most certainly* the Christian names of these two musicians, to the contractions of which the words *wbeedle* and *waddle* are added as characteristic of the persons and dispositions of the men; the former implying that Tom was a mean sycophant, and the latter that THE had an awkward and ridiculous gait. F. J. Z.

I know not, Orontes, how I shall escape your satire, for venturing to be thus free with a science which is sometimes, I think, admitted into a share of your meditations; yet, tell me honestly, is not this a faithful specimen of the spirit and talents of the *general* class of critic-writers? Far am I, however, from thinking irreverently of those useful members of the republic of letters, who with modesty and proper diffidence have offered their assistance in throwing a light upon obscure passages in ancient authors. Even when this spirit breaks out in it's highest pride and petulance of reformation, if it confines itself to classical enquiries, I can be contented with treating it only as an object of ridicule. But, I must confess, when I find it, with an assured and confident air, supporting religious or political doctrines upon the very uncertain foundation of various readings, forced analogies, and precarious conjectures, it is not without some difficulty I can suppress my indignation. Farewel. I am, &c.

L E T.

LETTER LXIV.

TO PHILOTES.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 4.

I think I promised you a letter from this place: yet I have nothing more material to write than that I got safe hither. To any other man I should make an apology for troubling him with an information so trivial; but among true friends there is nothing indifferent, and what would seem of no consequence to others, has in intercourses of this nature its weight and value. A by-stander, unacquainted with play, may fancy, perhaps, that the counters are of no more worth than they appear; but those who are engaged in the game, know they are to be considered at a higher rate. You see I draw my allusions from the scene before me: a propriety which the critics, I think, upon some occasions recommend.

I have often wondered what odd whim could first induce the healthy to follow the sick into places of this sort, and lay the scene of their diversions amidst the most wretched part of our species: one should imagine an hospital the last spot in the world, to which those who are in pursuit of pleasure would think of resorting. However, so it is; and by this means the company here furnish out a tragedy-comedy of the most singular kind. While some are literally dying, others are expiring in metaphor; and in one scene you are presented with the real, and in another with the fantastical pains of mankind. An ignorant spectator

might be apt to suspect, that each party was endeavouring to qualify itself for acting in the opposite character: for the infirm cannot labour more earnestly to recover the strength they have lost, than the robust to dissipate that which they possess. Thus the diseased pass not more anxious nights in their beds, than the healthy at the hazard-tables; and I frequently see a game at quadrille occasion as severe disquietudes as a fit of the gout. As for myself, I perform a sort of middle part in this motely drama, and am sometimes disposed to join with the invalids in envying the healthy, and sometimes have spirits enough to mix with the gay in pitying the splenetic.

The truth is, I have found some benefit by the waters; but I shall not be so sanguine as to pronounce with certainty of their effects, till I see how they enable me to pass through the approaching winter. That season, you know, is the time of trial with me; and if I get over the next with more ease than the last, I shall think myself obliged to celebrate the nymph of the springs in grateful sonnet.

But let times and seasons operate as they may, there is one part of me over which they will have no power; and in all the changes of this uncertain constitution, my heart will ever continue fixed and firmly yours. I am, &c,

LETTER LXV.

TO ORONTES.

MAY 6, 1733.

LET others consider you for those ample possessions you enjoy: suffer me to say, that it is your application of them alone which renders either them or you valuable in my estimation. Your splendid roofs and elegant accommodations I can view without the least emotion of envy: but when I observe you in the full power of exerting the noble purposes of your exalted generosity--it is then, I confess, I am apt to reflect,

with some regret, on the humbler supplies of my own more limited finances. *Nihil habet* (to speak of you in the same language that the first of orators addressed the greatest of emperors) *fortuna tua majus, quam ut possis; nec natura melius, quam ut velis servare quamplurimos*. To be able to soften the calamities of mankind, and inspire gladness into a heart oppressed with want, is indeed the noblest privilege of an en-

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larged fortune: but to exercise that privilege in all its generous refinements, is an instance of the most uncommon elegance both of temper and understanding.

In the ordinary dispensation of bounty, little address is required: but when it is to be applied to those of a superior rank and more elevated mind, there is as much charity discovered in the manner as in the measure of one's benevolence. It is something extremely mortifying to a well-formed spirit, to see itself considered as an object of compassion; as it is the part of improved humanity to honour this honest pride in our nature, and to relieve the necessities without offending the delicacy of the distressed.

I have seen charity (if charity it might be called) insult with an air of pity, and wound at the same time that it healed. But I have seen too the highest munificence dispensed with the most refined tenderness, and a bounty conferred with as much address as the most artful would employ in soliciting one. Suffer me, Orontes, upon this single occasion, to gratify my own inclinations in violence to yours, by pointing out the particular instance I have in my view; and allow me, at the same time, to join my acknowledgments, with those of the unfortunate person I recommend to your protection, for the generous assistance you lately afforded him.

LETTER LXVI.

TO CLEORA.

SEPTEMBER 5, 1737.

SHALL I own to you that I cannot repent of an offence which occasioned so agreeable a reproof? A censure, conveyed in such genteel terms, charms more than corrects, and tempts rather than reforms. I am sure, at least, though I should regret the crime, I shall always admire the rebuke, and long to kiss the hand that chasteneth in so pleasing a manner. However, I shall for the future strictly pursue your orders, and have sent you in this second parcel no other books than what my own library supplied. Among these you will find a collection of letters: I do not recommend them to you, having never read them; nor indeed am I acquainted with their characters; but they presented themselves to my hands as I was tumbling over some others: so I threw them in with the rest, and gave them a chance of adding to your amusement. I wish I could meet with any thing that had even the least probability of contributing to mine. But—

Forlorne of thee,

Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?

MILY.

Time, that reconciles one to most things, has not been able to render your absence in any degree less uneasy to me. I may rather be said to haunt the house in which I live, than to make one of the family. I walk in and out of the rooms like a restless spirit: for I never speak

till I am spoken to, and then generally answer, like Banco's ghost in Macbeth, with a deep sigh and a nod. Thus abstracted from every thing about me, I am yet quite ruined for a hermit, and find no more satisfaction in retirement, than you do in the company of ***.

How often do I wish myself in possession of that famous ring you were mentioning the other day, which had the property of rendering those who wore it invisible! I would rather be master of this wonderful *unigue*, than of the kingdom which Gyges gained by means of it; as I might then attend you, like your guardian angel, without censure or obstruction. How agreeable would it be to break out upon you, like Æneas from his cloud, where you least expected me; and join again the dear companion of my fortunes, in spite of that relentless power who has raised so many cruel storms to destroy us! But whilst I employed this extraordinary ring to these and a thousand other pleasing purposes, you would have nothing to apprehend from my being invested with such an invisible faculty. That innocence which guards and adorns my Cleora in her most gay and public hours, attends her, I well know, in her most private and retired ones; and she who always acts as under the eye of the best of Beings, has nothing to fear from the secret inspection of any mortal. Adieu. I am, &c.

LET.

LETTER LXVII.

TO EUPHRONIUS.

MAY 5, 1743.

IF you received the first account of my loss from other hands than mine, you must impute it to the dejection of mind into which that accident threw me. The blow, indeed, fell with too much severity, to leave me capable of recollecting myself enough to write to you immediately; as there cannot, perhaps, be a greater shock to a breast of any sensibility, than to see it's earliest and most valuable connections irreparably broken; than to find itself for ever torn from the first and most endeared object of it's highest veneration. At least, the affection and esteem I bore to that excellent parent were founded upon so many and such uncommon motives, that his death has given me occasion to lament not only a most tender father, but a most valuable friend.

That I can no longer enjoy the benefit of his animating example, is one among the many aggravating circumstances of my affliction; and I often apply to myself what an excellent antient has said upon a similar occasion, *Vereor ne nunc negligentius vivam*. There is nothing, in truth, puts us so much upon our guard, as to act under the constant inspection of one, whose virtues, as well as years, have rendered venerable. Never, indeed, did the dignity of goodness appear more irresistible in any man: Yet there was something at the same time so gentle in his manners, such an innocency and cheerfulness in his conversation, that he was as sure to gain affection as to inspire reverence.

It has been observed (and I think, by Cowley) That a man in much business must either make himself a knave, or the world will make him a fool. If there is any truth in this observation, it is not, however, without an exception. My father was early engaged in the great scenes of business, where he continued almost to his very last hour; yet he preserved his integrity firm and unbroken, through all those powerful assaults he must necessarily have encountered in so long a course of action.

If it were justice, indeed, to his other virtues, to single out any particular one as shining with superior lustre to the rest, I should point to his probity as the brightest part of his character. But the truth is, the whole tenor of his conduct was one uniform exercise of every moral quality that can adorn and exalt human nature. To defend the injured, to relieve the indigent, to protect the distressed, was the chief end and aim of all his endeavours, and his principal motive both for engaging and persevering in his profession was, to enable himself more abundantly to gratify so glorious an ambition.

No man had a higher relish of the pleasures of retired and contemplative life; as none was more qualified to enter into those calm scenes with greater ease and dignity. He had nothing to make him desirous of flying from the reflections of his own mind, nor any passions which his moderate patrimony would not have been more than sufficient to have gratified. But to live for himself only, was not consistent with his generous and enlarged sentiments. It was a spirit of benevolence that led him into the active scenes of the world; which upon any other principle he would either never have entered, or soon have renounced. And it was that godlike spirit which conducted and supported him through his useful progress, to the honour and interest of his family and friends, and to the benefit of every creature that could possibly be comprehended within the extensive circle of his beneficence.

I well know, my dear Euphronius, the high regard you pay to every character of merit in general, and the esteem in which you held this most valuable man in particular. I am sure, therefore, you would not forgive me, were I to make an apology for leaving with you this private monument of my veneration for a parent, whose least and lowest claim to my gratitude and esteem is, that I am indebted to him for my birth. Adieu. I am, &c.

LET.

LETTER LXVIII.

TO PHILOTES.

I Am particularly pleased with a passage in Homer, wherein Jupiter is represented as taking off his eyes, with a sort of satiety, from the horror of the field of battle, and relieving himself with a view of the Hippomolgi; a people famous, it seems, for their innocence and simplicity of manners. It is in order to practise the same kind of experiment, and give myself a short remission from that scene of turbulence and contention in which I am engaged, that I now turn my thoughts on you, Philotes, whose temperance and moderation may well justify me in calling you a modern Hippomolgian.

I forget which of the antients it is, that recommends this method of thinking over the virtues of one's acquaintance: but I am sure it is sometimes necessary to do so, in order to keep one's self in humour with our species, and preserve the spirit of philanthropy from being entirely extinguished. Those who frequent the ambitious walks of life, are apt to take their estimate of mankind from the small part of it that lies before them, and consider the rest of the world as practising, in different and underparts, the same treachery and dissimulation which marks out the characters of their superiors. It is difficult indeed to preserve the mind from falling into a general contempt of our race, whilst one is conversant with the worst part of it. I labour, however, as much as possible, to guard against that ungenerous disposition; as nothing is so apt to kill those seeds of benevolence which every

man should endeavour to cultivate in his breast.

Ill surely, therefore, have those wits employed their talents, who have made our species the object of their satire, and affected to subdue the vanity, by derogating from the virtues, of the human heart. But it will be found, I believe, upon an impartial examination, that there is more folly than malice in our natures, and that mankind oftener act wrong through ignorance than design. Perhaps the true measure of human merit is neither to be taken from the histories of former times, nor from what passes in the more striking scenes of the present generation. The greatest virtues have, probably, been ever the most obscure; and, I am persuaded, in all ages of the world, more genuine heroism has been overlooked and unknown, than either recorded or observed. That *aliquid divinum*, as Tully calls it, that celestial spark which every man, who coolly contemplates his own mind, may discover within him, operates where we least look for it, and often raises the noblest productions of virtue in the shade and obscurity of life.

But it is time to quit speculation for action, and return to the common affairs of the world. I shall certainly do so with more advantage, by keeping Philotes still in my view; as I shall enter into the interests of mankind with more alacrity, by thus considering the virtues of his honest heart as less singular than I am sometimes inclined to suppose. Adieu. I am, &c.

LETTER LXIX:

TO THE SAME.

AUGUST 3, 1755.

LET it not be any discouragement to you, Philotes, that you have hitherto received but little satisfaction from those noble speculations wherein you are employed. Truth, to use the expression of the excellent Mr. Wollaston;

“is the offspring of unbroken meditations, and of thoughts often revised and corrected.” It requires indeed great patience and resolution to dissipate that cloud of darkness which surrounds her; or (if you will allow me to go to

an old philosopher for my allusion) to draw her up from that profound well in which she lies concealed.

There is, however, such a general connection in the operations of nature, that the discovery even of a single truth opens the way to numberless others; and when once the mind has hit upon a right scent, she cannot wholly pursue her enquiries in vain:

*Canes ut montivagæ per sepe ferat
Naribus inveniant intellectus fronde quietes,
Cum semel insisterunt vestigia certa viam,
Sic aliud ex olo per te tute esse videre
—in rebus potest, cæcæque latebrat
Insanare omnes, et verum protrahere inde.*

LUCRET.

It must be owned, nevertheless, that, after having exerted all our sagacity and industry, we shall scarce arrive at certainty in many speculative truths. Providence does not seem to have intended that we should ever be in possession of demonstrative knowledge, beyond a very limited compass; though at the same time it cannot be supposed, without the highest injustice to the benevolent Author of our natures, that he has left any necessary truths without evident notes of distinction. But while the powers of the mind are thus limited in their extent, and greatly fallible likewise in their operations, is it not amazing, Philotes, that mankind should insult each other for difference in opinion, and treat every notion that opposes their own with obloquy and contempt? Is it not amazing that a creature with talents so precarious and circumscribed, should usurp that confidence which can only belong to much superior beings and claim a deference which is due to perfection alone? Surely the greatest arrogance that ever entered into the human heart, is that which not only pretends to be positive itself in points wherein the best and wisest have disagreed, but looks down with all the insolent superiority of contemptuous pity on those whose impartial reasonings have led them into opposite conclusions.

There is nothing, perhaps, more evident, than that our intellectual faculties are not formed by one general standard; and consequently that diversity of opinion is of the very essence of our natures. It seems probable that this disparity extends even to our sensitive powers; and though we agree indeed in giving the

same names to certain visible appearances, as whiteness, for instance, to snow; yet it is by no means demonstration, that the particular body which affects us with that sensation, raises the same precise idea in any two persons who shall happen to contemplate it together. Thus I have often heard you mention your youngest daughter as being the exact counter-part of her mother: now she does not appear to me to resemble her in any single feature. To what can this disagreement in our judgments be owing, but to a difference in the structure of our organs of sight? Yet as justly, Philotes, might you disclaim me for your friend, and look upon me with contempt for not discovering a similitude which appears so evident to your eyes; as any man can abuse or despise another for not apprehending the force of that argument which carries conviction to his own understanding.

Happy had it been for the peace of the world, if our maintainers of systems, either in religion or politics, had conducted their several debates with the full impression of this truth upon their minds. Genuine philosophy is ever, indeed, the least dogmatical; and I am always inclined to suspect the force of that argument which is obtruded with arrogance and sufficiency.

I am wonderfully pleased with a passage I met with the other day in the preface to Mr. Boyle's Philosophical Essays; and would recommend that cautious spirit, by which he professes to have conducted himself in his physical researches, as worthy the imitation of enquirers after truth of every kind.

'Perhaps you will wonder,' says he, 'that in almost every one of the following essays, I should use so often, perhaps, it seems, 'tis not improbable, as argue a diffidence of the truth of the opinions I incline to; and that I should be so shy of laying down principles, and sometimes of so much as venturing at explanations. But I must freely confess, that having met with many things of which I could give myself no one probable cause, and some things of which several causes may be assigned so differing, as not to agree in any thing, unless in their being all of them probable enough; I have often found such difficulties in searching into the causes and manner of things, and I am so sensible of my own disability

' lity to surmount those difficulties, that
 ' I dare speak confidently and positively
 ' of very few things, except matter of
 ' fact. And when I venture to deliver
 ' any thing by way of opinion, I should,
 ' if it were not for mere shame, speak
 ' yet more diffidently than I have been
 ' wont to do: Nor have my thoughts
 ' been altogether idle—in forming no-
 ' tions and attempting to devise hypo-
 ' theses. But I have hitherto (though
 ' not always, yet not unfrequently)
 ' found that what pleased us for a while,
 ' was soon after disgraced by some far-
 ' ther or new experiment. And, in-
 ' deed, I have the less envied many (for
 ' I say not *all*) of those writers who
 ' have taken upon them to deliver the
 ' causes of things, and explicate the
 ' mysteries of nature, since I have had
 ' opportunity to observe how many of
 ' their doctrines, after having been for
 ' a while applauded and even admired,

' have afterwards been confuted by some
 ' new phænomenon in nature, which
 ' was either unknown to such writers,
 ' or not sufficiently considered by them.'

If positiveness could become any man
 in any point of mere speculation, it must
 have been this truly noble philosopher
 when he was delivering the result of his
 studies in a science, wherein, by the
 united confession of the whole world,
 he so eminently excelled. But he had
 too much generosity to prescribe his own
 notions as a measure to the judgment of
 others, and too much good sense to as-
 sert them with heat or confidence.

Whoever, Philotes, pursues his spec-
 ulations with this humble unarrogat-
 ing temper of mind, and with the best
 exertion of those faculties which Provi-
 dence has assigned him, though he should
 not find the conviction, never, surely,
 can he fail of the reward of truth. I
 am, &c.

LETTER LXX:

TO PALAMEDES.

IF malice had never broke loose upon
 the world, till it seized your reputa-
 tion, I might reasonably condole with
 you on falling the first prey to it's un-
 restrained rage. But this spectre has
 haunted merit almost from it's earliest
 existence: and when all mankind were
 as yet included within a single family,
 one of them, we know, rose up in ma-
 lignity of soul against his innocent bro-
 ther. Virtue, it should seem, therefore,
 has now been too long acquainted with
 this her constant persecutor, to be either
 terrified or dejected at an appearance so
 common. The truth of it is, she must
 either renounce her noblest theatre of
 action, and seclude herself in cells and
 deserts, or be contented to enter upon
 the stage of the world with this fiend
 in her train. She cannot triumph, if she
 will not be traduced; and she should
 consider the clamours of censure, when
 joined with her own conscious applause,
 as so many acclamations that confirm
 her victory.

Let those who harbour this worst of
 human dispositions, consider the many
 wretched and contemptible circumstances
 which attend it: but it is the business of
 him who unjustly suffers from it, to re-

flect how it may be turned to his advan-
 tage. Remember then, my friend, that
 Generosity would lose half her dignity,
 if malice did not contribute to her ele-
 vation; and he that has never been in-
 jured, has never had it in his power to
 exercise the noblest privilege of heroic
 virtue. There is another consolation
 which may be derived from the rancour
 of the world, as it will instruct one in
 a piece of knowledge of the most singu-
 lar benefit in our progress through it:
 it will teach us to distinguish genuine
 friendship from counterfeit. For he only
 who is warmed with the real flame of
 amity, will rise up to support his single
 negative, in opposition to the clamorous
 votes of an undistinguishing multitude.

He, indeed, who can see a cool and
 deliberate injury done to his friend,
 without feeling himself wounded in his
 most sensible part, has never known the
 force of the most generous of all the hu-
 man affections. Every man, who has
 not taken the sacred name of friendship
 in vain, will subscribe to those senti-
 ments which Homer puts into the mouth
 of Achilles, and which Mr. Pope has
 opened and enlarged with such inimi-
 table strength and spirit.

A generous friendship no cold medium knows,
Burns with one love, with one resentment
glows;

One should our interests and our passions be;
My friend must hate the man that injures me.
ix. 609.

It may greatly also allay the pain which attends the wounds of defamation, and which are always most severely felt by those who least deserve them, to reflect, that though malice generally flings the first stone, it is folly and ignorance, it is indolence or irresolution, which are principally concerned in swelling the heap. When the tide of censure runs strongly against any particular character, the generality of mankind are too careless or too impotent to withstand the current; and thus, without any particular malice in their own natures, are often indolently carried along with others, by tamely falling in with the general stream. The number of those who

really mean one harm will wonderfully lessen after the deductions which may fairly be made of this sort: and the cup of unjust reproach must surely lose much of it's bitterness, where one is persuaded that malevolence has the least share in mingling the draught. For nothing, perhaps, stings a generous mind more sensibly in wrongs of this sort, than to consider them as evidences of a general malignity in human nature. But from whatever causes these storms may arise, Virtue would not be true to her own native privileges, if she suffered herself to sink under them. It is from that strength and firmness, which upright intentions will ever secure to an honest mind, that Palamedes, I am persuaded, will stand superior to those unmerited reproaches which assault his character, and preserve an unbroken repose amidst the little noise and strife of ignorant or malicious tongues. Farewell. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXI.

TO PHILOTES.

APRIL 9, 1740.

THERE is no advantage which attends a popular genius that I am so much inclined to envy, as the privilege of rendering merit conspicuous. An author who has raised the attention of the public to his productions, and gained a whole nation for his audience, may be considered as guardian of the temple of Fame, and invested with the prerogative of giving entrance to whomsoever he deems worthy of that glorious distinction. But the praise of an ordinary writer obstructs rather than advances the honour due to merit, and sullies the lustre it means to celebrate. Impotent panegyric operates like a blight wherever it falls, and injures all that it touches. Accordingly, Henry the IV. of France was wont humerously to ascribe his early grey hairs to the effect of numberless wretched compliments, which were paid him by a certain ridiculous orator of his times. But though the wreaths of folly should not disgrace the temple they surround; they wither, at least, as soon as received: and if they should not be offensive, most certainly, however, they will be transient. Whereas those, on the contrary, with which

an Horace or a Boileau, an Addison or a Pope, have crowned the virtues of their contemporaries, are as permanent as they are illustrious, and will preserve their colours and fragrance to remotest ages.

If I could thus weave the garlands of unfading applause; if I were in the number of those chosen spirits whose approbation is fame, your friend should not want that distinguishing tribute which his virtues deserve, and you request. I would tell the world (and tell it in a voice that should be heard far and remembered long) that Eusebes, with all the knowledge and experience of these later ages, has all the innocence and simplicity of the earliest: that he enforces the doctrines of his sacred function, not with the vain pomp of ostentatious eloquence, but with the far more powerful persuasion of active and exemplary virtue: that he softens the severity of precept with the ease and familiarity of conversation, and by generously mingling with the meanest committed to his care, insinuates the instructor under the air of the companion: that whilst he thus fills up the circle of his private station,

N he

he still turns his regards to the public, and employs his genius, his industry, and his fortune, in prosecuting and perfecting those discoveries, which tend most for the general benefit of mankind: in a word, that whilst others of his order are contending for the ambitious prizes of ecclesiastical dignities, it is his glorious pre-eminence to merit the highest, without enjoying or soliciting even the lowest. This, and yet more than this, the world should hear of your friend, if the world were inclined to listen to my voice. But though you, perhaps, Phi-

lotes; may be willing to give audience to my Muse,

*Namque Tu sulchas
Meas esse aliquid putare nugas.*

CATUL.

can she hope to find favour likewise in the sight of the public? Let me, then, rather content myself with the silent admiration of those virtues, which I am not worthy to celebrate; and leave it to others to place the good works of Eusebes where they may *shine forth before men*. I am, &c.

LETTER LXXII.

TO THE SAME.

DECEMBER 7, 1737.

THE visits of a friend, like those of the sun at this season, are extremely enlivening. I am sure at least they would both be particularly acceptable to me at present, when my mind is as much overcast as the heavens. I hope, therefore, you will not drop the design your letter intimates; of spending a few days with me in your way to * * *. Your company will greatly contribute to disperse those clouds of melancholy which the loss of a very valuable friend has hung over me. There is something, indeed, in the first moments of separation from those, whom a daily commerce and long habitude of friendship has grafted upon the heart, that disorders our whole frame of thought, and discolours all one's enjoyments. Let Philosophy assist with the utmost of her vaunted strength, the mind cannot immediately recover the firmness of it's posture, when those amicable props upon which it used to rest, are totally removed. Even the most indifferent objects with which we have long been familiar, take some kind of root in our hearts; and 'I should hardly care,' as a celebrated author has, with great good-nature, observed, 'to have an old post pulled up, which I remembered to ever since I was a child.'

To know how to receive the full sa-

tisfaction of a present enjoyment, with a disposition prepared at the same time to yield it up without reluctance, is hardly, I doubt, reconcileable to humanity; pain in being disunited from those we love, is a tax we must be contented to pay, if we would enjoy the pleasures of the social affections. One would not wish, indeed, to be wholly insensible to disquietudes of this kind; and we must renounce the most refined relish of our being, if we would upon all occasions possess our souls in a Stoical tranquillity.

That ancient philosopher, whose precept it was to converse with our friends as if they might one day prove our enemies, has been justly censured as advancing a very ungenerous maxim. To remember, however, that we must one day most certainly be divided from them, is a reflection, methinks, that should enter with us into our tender connections of every kind. From the present discomposure, therefore, of my own breast, and from that share which I take in whatever may affect the repose of yours, I cannot bid you adieu, without reminding you at the same time of the useful caution of one of your poetical acquaintance:

Quicquid amas cupias non placuisse nimis,

I am, &c.

LET.

LETTER LXXIII.

TO PALAMEDES.

FEBRUARY 13, 1741.

IF one would rate any particular merit according to it's true valuation, it may be necessary, perhaps, to consider how far it can be justly claimed by mankind in general. I am sure, at least, when I read the very uncommon sentiments of your last letter, I found their judicious author rise in my esteem, by reflecting, that there is not a more singular character in the world than that of a thinking man. It is not merely having a succession of ideas, which lightly skim over the mind, that can with any propriety be styled by that denomination. It is observing them separately and distinctly, and ranging them under their respective classes; it is calmly and steadily viewing our opinions on every side, and resolutely tracing them through all their consequences and connections, that constitutes the man of reflection, and distinguishes reason from fancy. Providence, indeed, does not seem to have formed any very considerable number of our species for an extensive exercise of this higher faculty; as the thoughts of the far greater part of mankind are necessarily restrained within the ordinary purposes of animal life. But even if we look up to those who move in much superior orbits, and who have opportunities to improve, as well as leisure to exercise their understandings; we shall find, that thinking is one of the least exerted privileges of cultivated humanity.

It is, indeed, an operation of the mind which meets with many obstructions to check it's just and free direction; but there are two principles which prevail more or less in the constitutions of most men, that particularly contribute to keep this faculty of the soul unemployed: I mean pride and indolence. To descend to truth through the tedious progression of well-examined deductions, is considered as a reproach to the quickness of understanding; as it is much too laborious a method for any but those who are possessed of a vigorous and resolute activity of mind. For this reason the greater part of our species generally chuse either to seize upon their conclu-

sions at once, or to take them by the bound from others, as best suiting with their vanity or their laziness. Accordingly Mr. Locke observes, that there are not so many errors and wrong opinions in the world, as is generally imagined. Not that he thinks mankind are by any means uniform in embracing truth; but because the majority of them, he maintains, have no thought or opinion at all about those doctrines concerning which they raise the greatest clamour. Like the common soldiers in an army, they follow where their leaders direct, without knowing, or even enquiring, into the cause for which they so warmly contend.

This will account for the slow steps by which truth has advanced in the world, on one side; and for those absurd systems which, at different periods, have had an universal currency on the other. For there is a strange disposition in human nature, either blindly to tread the same paths that have been traversed by others, or to strike out into the most devious extravagancies: the greater part of the world will either totally renounce their reason, or reason only from the wild suggestions of an heated imagination.

From the same source may be derived those divisions and animosities, which break the union both of public and private societies, and turn the peace and harmony of human intercourse into dissonance and contention. For while men judge and act by such measures as have not been proved by the standard of dispassionate reason, they must equally be mistaken in their estimates both of their own conduct and that of others.

If we turn our view from active to contemplative life, we may have occasion, perhaps, to remark, that thinking is no less uncommon in the literary than the civil world. The number of those writers who can with any justness of expression be termed thinking authors, would not form a very copious library, though one were to take in all of that kind which both ancient and modern times have produced. Necessarily, I

N 2 imagine,

imagine, must one exclude from a collection of this sort, all critics, commentators, modern Latin poets, translators, and, in short, all that numerous under-tribute in the commonwealth of literature that owe their existence merely to the thoughts of others. I should reject for the same reasons such compilers as Valerius Maximus and Aulus Gellius: though it must be owned, indeed, their works have acquired an accidental value; as they preserve to us several curious traces of antiquity, which time would otherwise have entirely worn out. Those teeming geniuses likewise, who have propagated the fruits of their studies through a long series of tracts, would have little pretence, I believe, to be admitted as writers of reflection. For this reason I cannot regret the loss of those incredible numbers of compositions which some of the ancients are said to have produced:

*Quale fuit Cassi rapido servientius anni
Ingenium; cassus quem fama est esse, librisque
Ambustum propriis.* Hor.

Thus Epicurus, we are told, left behind him three hundred volumes of his own works, wherein he had not inserted a single quotation: and we have it upon the authority of Varro's own words*, that he himself composed four hundred and ninety books. Seneca assures us, that Didymus the Grammarian wrote no less than four thousand; but Origen, it seems, was yet more prolific, and extended his performances even to six thousand treatises. It is obvious to imagine with what sorts of materials the productions of such expeditious workmen were wrought up: sound thought and well-matured reflections could have no share, we may be sure, in these hasty performances. Thus are books multiplied, whilst authors are scarce; and so much easier it is to write than to think! But shall I not myself, Palamedes, prove an instance that it is so, if I suspend any longer your own more important reflections, by interrupting you with such as mine? Adieu.

I am, &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

TO ORONTES.

IT is with much pleasure I look back upon that philological week which I lately enjoyed at ***; as there is no part, perhaps, of social life, which affords more real satisfaction, than those hours which one passes in rational and unreserved conversation. The free communication of sentiments amongst a set of ingenious and speculative friends, such as those you gave me the opportunity of meeting, throws the mind into the most advantageous exercise, and shews the strength or weakness of its opinions with greater force of conviction, than any other we can employ.

That it is not good for man to be alone; is true in more views of our species than one; and society gives strength to our reason, as well as polish to our

manners. The Soul, when left entirely to her own solitary contemplations, is insensibly drawn by a sort of constitutional bias, which generally leads her opinions to the side of her inclinations. Hence it is that she contracts those peculiarities of reasoning, and little habits of thinking, which so often confirm her in the most fantastical errors. But nothing is more likely to recover the mind from this false bent, than the counterwarmth of impartial debate. Conversation opens our views, and gives our faculties a more vigorous play; it puts us upon turning our notions on every side, and holds them up to a light that discovers those latent flaws, which would probably have lain concealed in the gloom of unagitated abstraction. Ac-

* This passage is be found in Aulus Gellius, who quotes it from a treatise which Varro had written concerning the wonderful effects of the number Seven. But the subject of this piece cannot be more ridiculous than the style in which it appears to have been composed: for that most learned author of his times (as Cicero, if I mistake not, somewhere calls him) informed his readers in that performance, *se jam duodecimam annorum hebdomadam ingrossasse, et ad eum diem septuaginta hebdomadas librorum conscripssisse.*

Accordingly one may remark, that most of those wild doctrines which have been let loose upon the world, have generally owed their birth to persons whose circumstances or dispositions have given them the fewest opportunities of canvassing their respective systems; in the way of free and friendly debate. Had the authors of many an extravagant hypothesis discussed their principles in private circles, ere they had given vent to them in public, the observation of Varro had never, perhaps, been made (or never at least with so much justice) that There is no opinion so absurd, but has some philosopher or other to produce in it's support.

Upon this principle, I imagine, it is that some of the finest pieces of antiquity are written in the dialogue-manner. Plato and Tully, it should seem, thought truth could never be examined with more advantage, than amidst the amicable opposition of well-regulated converse. It is probable, indeed, that subjects of a serious and philosophical kind were more frequently the topics of Greek and Roman conversations, than they are of ours; as the circumstances of the world had not yet given occasion to those prudential reasons which may now, perhaps, restrain a more free exchange of sentiments amongst us. There was something likewise, in the very scenes themselves, where they usually assembled, that almost unavoidably turned the stream of their conversations into this useful channel. Their rooms and gardens were generally adorned, you know, with the statues of the greatest masters of reason that had then appeared in the world; and while Socrates or Aristotle stood in their view, it is no wonder their discourse fell upon those subjects, which such animating representations would naturally suggest. It is probable, therefore, that many of those ancient pieces which are drawn up in the dialogue-manner, were no imaginary conversations invented by their authors, but faithful transcripts from real life. And it is this circumstance, perhaps, as much as any other, which contributes to give them that remarkable advantage over the generality of modern compositions which have been formed upon the same plan. I am sure, at least, I could scarce name more than three or four of this kind which have

appeared in our language, worthy of notice. My Lord Shaftesbury's dialogue, intitled, *The Moralists*; Mr. Addison's upon Ancient Coins; Mr. Spence's upon the *Odyssey*; together with those of my very ingenious friend Philemon to Hydaspes; are, almost, the only productions in this way, which have hitherto come forth amongst us with advantage. These, indeed, are all master-pieces of the kind, and written in the true spirit of learning and politeness. The conversation in each of these most elegant performances is conducted, not in the usual absurd method of introducing one disputant to be tamely silenced by the other; but in the more lively dramatic manner, where a just contrast of characters is preferred throughout, and where the several speakers support their respective sentiments with all the strength and spirit of a well-bred opposition.

But of all the conversation-pieces, whether antient or modern, either of the moral or polite kind, I know not one which is more elegantly written than the little anonymous dialogue concerning the rise and decline of Eloquence amongst the Romans. I call it anonymous, though I am sensible it has been ascribed not only to Tacitus and Quintilian, but even to Suetonius. The reasons, however, which the critics have respectively produced, are so exceedingly precarious and inconclusive, that one must have a very extraordinary share of classical faith indeed, to receive it as the performance of any of those celebrated writers. It is evidently, however, a composition of that period in which they flourished; and if I were disposed to indulge a conjecture, I should be inclined to give it to the younger Pliny. It exactly coincides with his age; it is addressed to one of his particular friends and correspondents; it is marked with some similar expressions and sentiments. But as arguments of this kind are always more imposing than solid, I recommend it to you as a piece, concerning the author of which nothing satisfactory can be collected. This I may one day or other, perhaps, attempt to prove in form, as I have amused myself with giving it an English dress. In the meantime I have enclosed my translation in this packet; not only with a view to your sentiments, but in return to your favour. I was

persuaded

persuaded I could not make you a better acknowledgment for the pleasure of that conversation which I lately participated through your means, than by introducing you to one, which (if my

copy is not extremely injurious to its original) I am sure, you cannot attend to without equal entertainment and advantage. Adieu. I am, &c.

A DIALOGUE CONCERNING ORATORY*.

TO FABIVS.

YOU have frequently, my friend, required me to assign a reason whence it has happened, that the Oratorical character which spread such a glorious lustre upon former ages, is now so totally extinct amongst us, as scarce to preserve even its name. It is the ancients alone, you observed, whom we distinguish with that appellation; while the eloquent of the present times are stiled only, pleaders, patrons, advocates, or any thing, in short, but Orators.

Hardly, I believe, should I have attempted a solution of your difficulty, or ventured upon the examination of a question, wherein the genius of the moderns, if they cannot, or their judgment, if they will not, rise to the same heights, must necessarily be given up; had I nothing of greater authority to offer upon the subject, than my own particular sentiments. But having been present, in the very early part of my life, at a conversation between some persons of great eloquence, considering the age in which they lived, who discussed this very point; my memory, and not my judgment, will be concerned, whilst I endeavour, in their own style and manner, and according to the regular course of their debate, to lay before you the several reasonings of those celebrated geniuses: each of them, indeed, agreeably to the peculiar turn and character of the speaker, alledging different, though probable causes, of the same fact; but all of them supporting their respective sentiments with ingenuity and good-sense. Nor were the orators of the present age without an advocate in this debate: for one of the company took the opposite side, and treating the ancients with much se-

verity and contempt, declared in favour of modern eloquence.

Marcus Aper and Julius Secundus, two distinguished geniuses of our forum, made a visit to Maternus the day after he had publicly recited his tragedy of Cato; a piece which gave, it seems, great offence to those in power, and was much canvassed in all conversations. Maternus, indeed, seemed throughout that whole performance to have considered only what was suitable to the character of his hero, without paying a proper regard to those prudential restraints which were necessary for his own security. I was at that time a warm admirer and constant follower of those great men; inasmuch, that I not only attended them when they were engaged in the courts of judicature; but, from my fond attachment to the arts of eloquence, and with a certain ardency peculiar to youth, I joined in all their parties, and was present at their most private conversations. Their great abilities, however, could not secure them from the critics. They alledged, that Secundus had by no means an easy elocution; whilst Aper, they pretended, owed his reputation as an orator, more to nature than to art. It is certain, nevertheless, that their objections were without foundation. The speeches of the former were always delivered with sufficient fluency; and his expression was clear, though concise; as the latter had, most undoubtedly, a general tincture of literature. The truth is, one could not so properly say, he was *without*, as *above* the assistance of learning. He imagined, perhaps, the powers and application of his genius would be so much the more

* It is necessary to inform those readers of the following Dialogue, who may be disposed to compare it with the original, that the edition of Heumannus, printed at Göttingen, 1719, has been generally followed,

admired,

admired, as it should not appear to derive any of its lustre from the acquired arts.

We found Maternus, when we entered his apartment, with the tragedy in his hand which he had recited the day before. 'Are you, then,' said Secundus, addressing himself to him, 'so little discouraged with the malicious insinuations of these ill-natured censures, as still to cherish this obnoxious tragedy of yours? Or, perhaps, you are revising it, in order to expunge the exceptionable passages; and propose to send your Cato into the world, I will not say with superior charms, but at least, with greater security than in its original form?'—'You may peruse it,' returned he, 'if you please; you will find it remains just in the same situation as when you heard it read. I intend, however, that Thyestes shall supply the defects of Cato: for I am meditating a tragedy upon that subject, and have already, indeed, formed the plan. I am hastening, therefore the publication of this play in my hand, that I may apply myself entirely to my new design.'—'Are you, then,' in good earnest, replied Aper, 'so enamoured of dramatic poetry, as to renounce the business of oratory, in order to consecrate your whole leisure to—Medea, I think, it was before, and now, it seems, to Thyestes? when the causes of so many worthy friends, the interests of so many powerful communities, demand you in the forum: a talk more than sufficient to employ your attention, though neither Cato nor Domitius had any share of it; though you were not continually turning from one dramatic performance to another, and adding the tales of Greece to the history of Rome.

'I should be concerned,' answered Maternus, 'at the severity of your rebuke, if the frequency of our debates upon this subject had not rendered it somewhat familiar to me. But how,' added he, smiling, 'can you accuse me of deserting the business of my profession, when I am every day engaged in defending poetry against your accusations? And I am glad,' continued he, looking towards Secundus, 'that we have now an opportunity of discussing this point before so competent a judge. His decision will either determine me to renounce all pretensions

to poetry for the future, or (which I rather hope) will be a sanction for my quitting that confined species of oratory, in which, methinks, I have sufficiently laboured, and authorize the devoting myself to the more enlarged and sacred eloquence of the Muses.'

'Give me leave,' interposed Secundus, 'before Aper takes exception to his judge, to say, what all honest ones usually do in the same circumstances, that I desire to be excused from sitting in judgment upon a cause, wherein I must acknowledge myself biased in favour of a party concerned. All the world is sensible of that strict friendship which has long subsisted between me and that excellent man, as well as great poet, Scaevus Bassus. To which let me add, if the Muses are to be arraigned, I know of none who can offer more prevailing bribes.'

'I have nothing to alledge against Bassus,' returned Aper, 'or any other man, who, not having talents for the bar, chuses to establish a reputation of the poetical kind. Nor shall I suffer Maternus (for I am willing to join issue with him before you) to evade my charge by drawing others into his party. My accusation is levelled singly against him; who, formed as he is by nature with a most masculine and truly oratorical genius, chuses to suffer so noble a faculty to lie waste and uncultivated. I must remind him, however, that by the exercise of this commanding talent, he might at once both acquire and support the most important friendships, and have the glory to see whole provinces and nations rank themselves under his patronage: a talent, of all others, the most advantageous, whether considered with respect to interest, or to honours; a talent, in short, that affords the most illustrious means of propagating a reputation, not only within our own walls, but throughout the whole compass of the Roman empire, and, indeed, to the most distant nations in the globe.

'If utility ought to be the governing motive of every action and every design of our lives; can we possibly be employed to better purpose, than in the exercise of an art, which enables a man, upon all occasions, to support the interest of his friend, to protect the rights of the stranger, to defend the cause of the injured? that not only renders

renders him the terror of his open and secret adversaries, but secures him, as it were, by the most firm and permanent guard?

The particular usefulness, indeed, of this profession is evidently manifested in the opportunities it supplies of serving others, though we should have no occasion to exert it in our own behalf: but should we, upon any occurrence, be ourselves attacked, the sword and buckler is not a more powerful defence in the day of battle, than Oratory in the dangerous season of public arraignment. What had Marcellus lately to oppose to the united resentment of the whole senate, but his eloquence? Yet, supported by that formidable auxiliary, he stood firm and unmoved, amidst all the assaults of the artful Helvidius; who, notwithstanding he was a man of sense and elocution, was totally inexperienced in the management of this sort of contests. But I need not insist farther on this head; well persuaded as I am, that Maternus will not controvert so clear a truth. Rather let me observe the pleasure which attends the exercise of the persuasive art: a pleasure, which does not arise only once, perhaps, in a whole life, but flows in a perpetual series of gratifications. What can be more agreeable to a liberal and ingenuous mind, formed with a relish of rational enjoyments, than to see one's levée crouded with a concourse of the most illustrious personages; not as followers of your interest or your power; not because you are rich and destitute of heirs; but singly in consideration of your superior qualifications. It is not unusual, upon these occasions, to observe the wealthy, the powerful, and the childless, addressing themselves to a young man (and probably no rich one) in favour of themselves or their friends. Tell me, now, has authority or wealth a charm, equal to the satisfaction of thus beholding persons of the highest dignity, venerable by their age, or powerful by their credit, in the full enjoyment of every external advantage, courting your assistance, and tacitly acknowledging, that, great and distinguished as they are, there is something still wanting to them more valuable than all their possessions? Represent to yourself the honourable

crowd of clients conducting the orator from his house, and attending him in his return; think of the glorious appearance he makes in public, the distinguishing respect that is paid to him in the courts of judicature, the exultations of heart when he rises up before a full audience, hushed in solemn silence, and fixed attention, pressing round the admired speaker, and receiving every passion he deems proper to raise! Yet these are but the ordinary joys of eloquence, and visible to every common observer. There are others, and those far superior, of a more concealed and delicate kind, and of which the orator himself can alone be sensible. Does he stand forth prepared with a studied harangue? As the composition, so the pleasure, in this instance, is more solid and equal. If, on the other hand, he rises in a new and unexpected debate, the previous solicitude, which he feels upon such occasions, recommends and improves the pleasure of his success; as indeed the most exquisite satisfaction of this kind is, when he boldly hazards the unpremeditated speech. For it is in the productions of genius, as in the fruits of the earth; those which arise spontaneously are ever the most agreeable. If I may venture to mention myself, I must acknowledge, that neither the satisfaction I received when I was first invested with the laticlave, nor even when I entered upon the several high posts in the state; though the pleasure was heightened to me, not only as those honours were new to my family, but as I was born in a city by no means favourable to my pretensions—the warm transports, I say, which I felt at those times, were far inferior to the joy which has glowed in my breast, when I have successfully exerted my humble talents in defence of those causes and clients committed to my care. To say truth, I imagined myself, at such seasons, to be raised above the highest dignities, and in the possession of something far more valuable, than either the favour of the great, or the bounty of the wealthy, can ever bestow.

Of all the arts or sciences, there is no one, which crowns its votaries with a reputation in any degree comparable to that of eloquence. It is not only those of a more exalted rank in the state,

state, who are witnesses of the orator's fame; it is extended to the observation even of our very youth of any hopes or merit. Whose example, for instance, do parents more frequently recommend to their sons? or who are more the gaze and admiration of the people in general? whilst every stranger that arrives, is curious of seeing the man, of whose character he has heard such honourable report. I will venture to affirm, that Marcellus, whom I just now mentioned, and Vibius, (for I chuse to produce my instances from modern times, rather than from those more remote) are as well known in the most distant corners of the empire, as they are at Capua or Vercellæ, the places, it is said, of their respective nativity: an honour, for which they are by no means indebted to their immense riches. On the contrary, their wealth may justly, it should seem, be ascribed to their eloquence. Every age, indeed, can produce persons of genius, who, by means of this powerful talent, have raised themselves to the most exalted station. But the instances I just now mentioned, are not drawn from distant times: they fall within the observation of our own eyes. Now the more obscure the original extraction of those illustrious persons was, the more humble the patrimony to which they were born, so much stronger proof they afford of the great advantage of the oratorical arts. Accordingly, without the recommendation of family or fortune, without any thing very extraordinary in their virtues (and one of them rather contemptible in his address) they have for many years maintained the highest credit and authority among their fellow-citizens. Thus, from being chiefs in the forum, where they preserved their distinguished eminence as long as they thought proper; they have passed on to the enjoyment of the same high rank in Vespasian's favour, whose esteem for them seems to be mixed even with a degree of reverence: as indeed they both support and conduct the whole weight of his administration. That excellent and venerable prince (whose singular character it is, that he can endure to hear much) well knows that the rest of his

favourites are distinguished only as they are the objects of his munificence; the supplies of which he can easily raise, and with the same facility confer on others. Whereas Crispus and Marcellus recommended themselves to his notice by advantages which no earthly potentate either did, or could, bestow. The truth of it is, inscriptions, and statues, and emblems of dignity, could claim but the lowest rank, amidst their more illustrious distinctions: Not that they are unpossessed of honours of this kind, any more than they are destitute of wealth or power: advantages, much oftener affectedly depreciated than sincerely despised.

Such, my friends, are the ornaments, and such the rewards of an early application to the business of the forum, and the arts of oratory! But Poetry, to which Maternus wishes to devote his days (for it was that which gave rise to our debate) confers neither dignity to her followers in particular, nor advantage to society in general. The whole amount of her pretensions is nothing more than the transient pleasure of a vain and fruitless applause. Perhaps what I have already said, and am going to add, may not be very agreeable to my friend Maternus: however, I will venture to ask him, what avails the eloquence of his Jason or Agamemnon? what mortal does it either defend or oblige? Who is it that courts the patronage, or joins the train, of Bassus, that ingenious, (or, if you think the term more honourable) that illustrious poet? Eminent as he may be, if his friend, his relation, or himself, were involved in any litigated transactions, he would be under the necessity of having recourse to Secundus, or, perhaps, to you, my friend; but by no means, however, as you are a poet, and in order to solicit you to bestow some verses upon him: for verses he can compose himself, fair, it seems, and goodly. Yet, after all, when he has, at the cost of much time, and many a laboured lucubration, spun out a single canto, he is obliged to traverse the whole town in order to collect an audience. Nor can he procure even this compliment, slight as it is, without actually

* Maternus.

* purchasing

purchasing it: for the hiring a room,
 erecting a stage, and dispersing his
 tickets, are articles which must neces-
 sarily be attended with some expence.
 And let us suppose his poem is ap-
 proved: the whole admiration is over
 in a day or two, like that of a fine
 flower which dies away without pro-
 ducing any fruit. In a word, it se-
 cures to him neither friend nor patron,
 nor confers even the most inconsider-
 able favour upon a single creature.
 The whole amount of his humble
 gains is the fleeting pleasure of a cla-
 morous applause! We looked upon it,
 lately, as an uncommon instance of
 generosity in Vespasian, that he pre-
 sented Bassus with fifty thousand ses-
 tertes*. Honourable, I grant, it is,
 to possess a genius which merits the
 imperial bounty: but how much more
 glorious (if a man's circumstances will
 admit of it) to exhibit in one's own
 person an example of munificence and
 liberality? Let it be remembered like-
 wise, if you would succeed in your
 poetical labours, and produce any
 thing of real worth in that art, you
 must retire, as the poets express them-
 selves,

"To silent groves and sequester'd groves:"

that is, you must renounce the conver-
 sation of your friends, and every civil
 duty of life, to be concealed in gloomy
 and unprofitable solitude.

If we consider the votaries of this
 idle art with respect to fame, that
 single recompence which they pretend
 to derive, or indeed to seek, from their
 studies; we shall find, they do not by
 any means enjoy an equal proportion
 of it with the sons of Oratory. For
 even the best poets fall within the no-
 tice of but a very small proportion of
 mankind; whilst indifferent ones are
 universally disregarded. Tell me,
 Maternus, did ever the reputation of
 the most approved rehearsal of the po-
 etical kind reach the cognizance even
 of half the town; much less extend
 itself to distant provinces? Did ever
 any foreigner, upon his arrival here,
 enquire after Bassus? Or if he did, it
 was merely as he would after a picture
 or a statue; just to look upon him, and
 pass on. I would in no sort be un-
 derstood as discouraging the pursuit

of Poetry in those who have no talents
 for Oratory; if happily they can, by
 that means, amuse their leisure and
 establish a just character. I look upon
 every species of Eloquence as venerable
 and sacred; and prefer her, in what-
 ever guise she may think proper to ap-
 pear, before any other of her sister arts:
 not only, Maternus, when she exhi-
 bits herself in your chosen favourite,
 the solemn tragedy, or lofty heroic,
 but even in the pleasant lyric, the
 wanton elegy, the severe iambic, the
 witty epigram, or, in one word, in
 whatever other habit she is pleased to
 assume. But (I repeat it again) my
 complaint is levelled singly against
 you; who, designed as you are by na-
 ture for the most exalted rank of elo-
 quence, chuse to desert your station,
 and deviate into a lower order. Had
 you been endued with the athletic vi-
 gour of Nicostratus, and born in
 Greece, where arts of that sort are
 esteemed not unworthy of the most re-
 fined characters; as I could not pa-
 tiently have suffered that uncommon
 strength of arm, formed for the nobler
 combat, to have idly spent itself in
 throwing the javelin, or tossing the
 coit: so I now call you forth from
 rehearsals and theatres, to the forum,
 and business, and high debate; espe-
 cially since you cannot urge the same
 plea for engaging in poetry which is
 now generally alledged, that it is less
 liable to give offence than oratory.
 For the ardency of your genius has
 already flamed forth, and you have
 incurred the displeasure of our supe-
 riors: not, indeed, for the sake of a
 friend; that would have been far less
 dangerous; but in support, truly, of
 Cato! Nor can you offer in excu-
 se, either the duty of your profession, ju-
 stice to your client, or the unquench-
 ed heat of debate. You fixed, it should
 seem, upon this illustrious and popular
 subject with deliberate design, and as
 a character that would give weight and
 authority to your sentiments. You
 will reply, I am aware, "It was
 that very circumstance which gained
 you such universal applause, and ren-
 dered you the general topic of dis-
 course." Talk no more then, I be-
 seech you, of security and repose,
 whilst you thus industriously raise up

* About 400l. of our money.

to yourself so potent an adversary. For my own part, at least, I am contented with engaging in questions of a more modern and private nature; wherein, if in defence of a friend I am under a necessity of taking liberties unacceptable, perhaps, to my superiors, the honest freedom of my zeal will, I trust, not only be excused but applauded.

Aper having delivered this with his usual warmth and earnestness, 'I am prepared,' replied Maternus, in a milder tone and with an air of pleasantry, 'to draw up a charge against the orators, no less copious than my friend's panegyric in their behalf. I suspected, indeed, he would turn out of his road, in order to attack the poets: though, I must own at the same time, he has somewhat softened the severity of his satire, by certain concessions he is pleased to make in their favour. He is willing, I perceive, to allow those whose genius does not point to oratory, to apply themselves to poetry. Nevertheless, I do not scruple to acknowledge, that with some talents, perhaps, for the forum, I chuse to build my reputation on dramatic poetry. The first attempt I made for this purpose, was by exposing the dangerous power of Vatinius: a power which even Nero himself disapproved, and which that infamous favourite abused, to the prophanation of the sacred Muses. And I am persuaded, if I enjoy any share of fame, it is to poetry rather than to oratory that I am indebted for the acquisition. It is my fixed purpose, therefore, entirely to withdraw myself from the fatigue of the bar. I am by no means ambitious of that splendid concourse of clients, which Aper has represented in such pompous colours, any more than I am of those sculptured honours which he mentioned; though I must confess they have made their way into my family, notwithstanding my inclinations to the contrary. Innocence is, now at least, a surer guard than eloquence; and I am in no apprehension I shall ever have occasion to open my lips in the senate, unless, perhaps, in defence of a friend.

' Woods and groves and solitude, the objects of Aper's invective, afford me, I will own to him, the most exquisite satisfaction. Accordingly, I esteem

' it one of the great privileges of poetry, that it is not carried on in the noise and tumult of the world, amidst the painful importunity of anxious suitors, and the affecting tears of distressed criminals. On the contrary, a mind enamoured of the Muses retires into scenes of innocence and repose, and enjoys the sacred haunts of silence and contemplation. Here genuine Eloquence received her birth, and *here* she fixed her sacred and sequestered habitation. 'Twas *here*, in decent and becoming garb, she recommended herself to the early notice of mortals; inspiring the breasts of the blameless and the good: *here* first the voice divine of oracles was heard. But *she* of modern growth, offspring of lucre and contention, was born in evil days, and employed (as Aper very justly expressed it) instead of *tracapan*: whilst happier times, or, in the language of the Muses, the golden age, free alike from orators and from crimes, abounded with inspired poets, who exerted their noble talents, not in defending the guilty, but in celebrating the good. Accordingly no character was ever more eminently distinguished, or more augtly honoured: first by the gods themselves, to whom the poets were supposed to serve as ministers at their feasts, and messengers of their high behests; and afterwards by that sacred offspring of the gods, the first venerable race of legislators. In that glorious list we read the names, not of orators indeed, but of Orpheus, and Linus, or, if we are inclined to trace the illustrious roll still higher, even of Apollo himself.

' But these, perhaps, will be treated by Aper as heroes of Romance. He cannot however deny, that Homer has received as signal honours from posterity, as Demosthenes; or that the fame of Sophocles or Euripides is as extensive as that of Lyfias or Hyperides; that Cicero's merit is less universally confessed than Virgil's; or that not one of the compositions of Asinius or Messalla is in so much request as the Medea of Ovid, or the Thyestes of Varius. I will advance even farther, and venture to compare the unenvied fortune and happy self-converse of the poet with the anxious and busy life of the orator: notwithstanding the hazardous contentions of the latter may

possibly raise him even to the consular dignity. Far more desirable, in my estimation, was the calm retreat of Virgil: where yet he lived not unhonoured by his Prince, nor unregarded by the world. If the truth of either of these assertions should be questioned, the letters of Augustus will witness the former; as the latter is evident from the conduct of the whole Roman people, who when some verses of that divine poet were repeated in the theatre, where he happened to be present, rose up to a man, and saluted him with the same respect that they would have paid to Augustus himself. But to mention our own times: I would ask whether Secundus Pomponius is any thing inferior, either in dignity of life, or solidity of reputation, to Afer Domitius? As to Crispus or Marcellus, to whom Afer refers me for an animating example, what is there in their present exalted fortunes really desirable? Is it that they pass their whole lives either in being alarmed for themselves, or in striking terror into others? Is it that they are daily under a necessity of courting the very men they hate; that, holding their dignities by unmanly adulation, their masters never think them sufficiently slaves, nor the people sufficiently free? And, after all, what is this their so much envied power? Nothing more, in truth, than what many a paltry freedman has frequently enjoyed. But — ME let the lovely Muses lead” (as Virgil sings) “to silent groves and heavenly-haunted streams, remote from business and from care; and still superior to the painful necessity of acting in wretched opposition to my better heart. Nor let me more, with anxious steps, and dangerous, pursue pale Fame amidst the noisy forum! May never clamorous suitors, nor panting freed-man with officious haste, awake my peaceful slumbers! Uncertain of futurity, and equally unconcerned, ne’er may I bribe the favour of the great; by rich bequests to avarice insatiate; nor, accumulation vain! amass more wealth than I may transfer as inclination prompts, whenever shall arrive my life’s last fatal period: and then, not in horrid guise of mournful pomp, but crowned with chaplets gay, may I be entombed; nor let a friend, with un-

“availing zeal, solicit the useless tribute of posthumous memorials!”

Maternus had scarce finished these words, which he uttered with great emotion, and with an air of inspiration, when Messalla entered the room; who, observing much attention in our countenances, and imagining the conversation turned upon something of more than ordinary import—“Perhaps,” said he; “you are engaged in a *consultation*; and, I doubt, I am guilty of an unseasonable interruption.”—“By no means,” answered Secundus: “on the contrary, I wish you had given us your company sooner; for, I am persuaded, you would have been extremely entertained. Our friend Afer has, with great eloquence, been exhorting Maternus to turn the whole strength of his genius and his studies to the business of the forum: while Maternus, on the other hand, agreeably to the character of one who was pleading the cause of the Muses, has defended his favourite art with a boldness and elevation of style more suitable to a poet than an orator.”

“It would have afforded me infinite pleasure,” replied Messalla, “to have been present at a debate of this kind. And I cannot but express my satisfaction, in finding the most eminent orators of our times not confining their geniuses to points relating to their profession, but canvassing such other topics in their conversation, as give a very advantageous exercise to their faculties, at the same time that it furnishes an entertainment of the most instructive kind, not only to themselves, but to those who have the privilege of being joined in their party. And believe me, Secundus, the world received with much approbation your history of J. Asiaticus, as an earnest that you intend to publish more pieces of the same nature. On the other side,” continued he, with an air of irony, “it is observed with equal satisfaction, that Afer has not yet bid adieu to the questions of the schools, but employs his leisure rather after the example of the modern rhetoricians than of the ancient orators.”

“I perceive,” returned Afer, “that you continue to treat the moderns with your usual derision and contempt; while the antients alone are in full possession

possession of your esteem. It is a maxim, indeed, I have frequently heard you advance, (and, allow me to say, with much injustice to yourself, and to your brother) that there is no such thing in the present age as an orator. This you are the less scrupulous to maintain, as you imagine it cannot be imputed to a spirit of envy; since you are willing at the same time to exclude yourself from a character which every body else is inclined to give you.

‘I have hitherto,’ replied Messalla, ‘found no reason to change my opinion: and I am persuaded, that even you yourself, Aper, (whatever you may sometimes affect to the contrary) as well as my other two friends here, join with me in the same sentiments. I should, indeed, be glad, if any of you would discuss this matter, and account for so remarkable a disparity, which I have often endeavoured in my own thoughts. And what to some appears a satisfactory solution of this phenomenon, to me, I confess, heightens the difficulty: for I find the very same difference prevails among the Grecian orators; and that the priest Nicetes, together with others of the Ephesian and Mitylenean schools, who humbly content themselves with raising the acclamations of their tasteless auditors, deviate much farther from Æschines or Demosthenes, than you, my friends, from Tully or Asinius.’

‘The question you have started,’ said Secundus, ‘is a very important one, and well worthy of consideration. But who so capable of doing justice to it as yourself? who, besides the advantages of a fine genius and great literature, have given, it seems, particular attention to this enquiry.’—‘I am very willing,’ answered Messalla, ‘to say before you my thoughts upon the subject, provided you will assist me with yours as I go along.’—‘I will engage for two of us,’ replied Maternus: Secundus and myself will speak to such points as you shall, I do not say omit, but, think proper to leave us. As for Aper, you just now informed us, it is usual with him to dissent from you in this article: and, indeed, I see he is already preparing to oppose us, and will not look with indifference upon this our association in support of the antients.’

‘Undoubtedly,’ returned Aper, ‘I shall not tamely suffer the moderns to be condemned, unheard and undefended. But first let me ask, whom it is you call *antients*? What age of orators do you distinguish by that designation? The word always suggests to me a Nestor, or an Ulysses; men who lived above a thousand years since: whereas you seem to apply it to Demosthenes and Hyperides, who, it is agreed, flourished so late as the times of Philip and Alexander, and, indeed, survived them. It appears from hence, that there is not much above four hundred years distance between our age and that of Demosthenes: a portion of time, which, considered with respect to human duration; appears, I acknowledge, extremely long; but, if compared with that immense æra which the philosophers talk of, is exceedingly contracted, and seems almost but of yesterday. For if it be true, what Cicero observes in his treatise inscribed to Hortensius, that the great and genuine year is that period in which the heavenly bodies return to the same position, wherein they were placed when they first began their respective orbits; and this revolution contains 12,954 of our solar years; then Demosthenes, this antient Demosthenes of yours, lived in the same year, or rather I might say, in the same month, with ourselves. But to mention the Roman orators: I presume, you will scarcely prefer Mænius Agrippa (who may with some propriety, indeed, be called an antient) to the men of eloquence among the moderns. It is Cicero, then, I suppose, together with Cælius, Cæsar, and Calvus, Brutus, Asinius, and Messalla, to whom you give this honourable precedence: yet I am at a loss to assign a reason, why these should be deemed antients rather than moderns. To instance in Cicero: he was killed, as his freedman Tiro informs us, on the 26th of December, in the consulship of Hirtius and Pansa, in which year Augustus and Pedius succeeded them in that dignity. Now, if we take fifty-six years for the reign of Augustus, and add twenty-three for that of Tiberius, about four for that of Caius, fourteen a-piece for Claudius and Nero, one for Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, together

gether with the six that our present excellent prince has enjoyed the empire, we shall have about one hundred and twenty years from the death of Cicero to these times: a period to which it is not impossible that a man's life may extend. I remember, when I was in Britain, to have met with an old soldier, who assured me, he had served in the army which opposed Cæsar's descent upon that island. If we suppose this person, by being taken prisoner, or by any other means, to have been brought to Rome, he might have heard Cæsar and Cicero, and likewise any of our contemporaries. I appeal to yourselves, whether, at the last public donative, there were not several of the populace who acknowledged they had received the same bounty, more than once, from the hands of Augustus? It is evident, therefore, that these people might have been present at the pleadings both of Corvinus and Asinius: for Corvinus was alive in the middle of the reign of Augustus, and Asinius towards the latter end. Surely, then, you will not split a century, and call one orator an antique, and another a modern, when the very same person might be an auditor of both; and thus, as it were, render them contemporaries.

The conclusion I mean to draw from this observation is, that whatever advantages these orators might derive to their characters from the period of time in which they flourished, the same will extend to us: and, indeed, with much more reason than to S. Galba, or to C. Carbonius. It cannot be denied that the compositions of these last are very inelegant and unpolished performances; as I could wish, that not only your admired Calvus and Cælius, but, I will venture to add too, even Cicero himself, (for I shall deliver my sentiments with great freedom) had not considered them as the proper models of their imitation. Suffer me to premise, however, as I go along, that eloquence changes its qualities as it runs through different ages. Thus

as Græchus, for instance, is much more copious and florid than old Cato, so Crassus rises into a far higher strain of politeness and refinement than Græchus. Thus, likewise, as the speeches of Tully are more regular, and marked with superior elegance and sublimity, than those of the two orators last mentioned; so Corvinus is considerably more smooth and harmonious in his periods, as well as more correct in his language, than Tully. I am not considering which of them is most eloquent: all I endeavour to prove at present is, that oratory does not manifest itself in one uniform figure, but is exhibited by the antients under a variety of different appearances. However, it is by no means a just way of reasoning, to infer that one thing must necessarily be worse than another, merely because it is not the same. Yet such is the unaccountable perversity of human nature, that whatever has antiquity to boast, is sure to be admired, as every thing novel is certainly disapproved. There are critics, I doubt not, to be found, who prefer even Appius Cæcus to Cato; as it is well known that Cicero had his censurers, who objected that his style was swelling and redundant, and by no means agreeable to the elegant conciseness of Attic eloquence. You have certainly read the letters of Calvus and Brutus to Cicero. It appears by those epistolary collections, that Cicero considered Calvus as a dry, unanimated orator, at the same time that he thought the style of Brutus negligent and unconnected. These, in their turn, had their objections, it seems, to Cicero: Calvus condemned his oratorical compositions, for being weak and enervated; as Brutus (to use his own expression) esteemed them feeble and disjointed. If I were to give my opinion, I should say, they each spoke truth of one another. But I shall examine these orators separately hereafter: my present design is only to consider them in a general view. The admirers of antiquity are agreed, I think, in extending the æra of the

* From this passage Fabricius asserts that this dialogue was written in the 6th year of Vespasian's reign; but he evidently mistakes the time in which the scene of it is laid, for that in which it was composed. It is upon arguments no better founded than the critics have given Tacitus and Quintilian the honour of this elegant performance. *Tit. Fabric. Bib. Lat. V. l. 559.*

antients as far as Cassius Severus; whom they assert to have been the first that struck out from the plain and simple manner, which till then prevailed. Now I affirm that he did so, not from any deficiency in point of genius or learning, but from his superior judgment and good-sense. He saw it was necessary to accommodate oratory, as I observed before, to the different times and taste of the audience. Our ancestors, indeed, might be contented (and it was a mark of their ignorance and want of politeness that they were so) with the immoderate and tedious length of speeches, which was in vogue in those ages; as, in truth, to be able to harangue for a whole day together was itself looked upon, at that illiterate period, as a talent worthy of the highest admiration. The immeasurable introduction, the circumstantial detail, the endless division and subdivision, the formal argument drawn out into a dull variety of logical deductions, together with a thousand other impertinencies of the same tasteless stamp, which you may find laid down among the precepts of those driest of all writers, Hermagoras and Apollodorus, were then held in supreme honour. And, to compleat all, if the orator had just dipped into philosophy, and could sprinkle his harangue with some of the most trite maxims of that science, they thundered out his applauses to the skies. For these were new and uncommon topics to them; as indeed very few of the orators themselves had the least acquaintance with the writings either of the philosophers or the rhetoricians. But in our more enlightened age, where even the lowest part of an audience have at least some general notion of literature, Eloquence is constrained to find out new and more florid paths. She is obliged to avoid every thing that may fatigue or offend the ears of her audience; especially as she must now appear before judges, who decide, not by law, but by authority; who prescribe what limits they think proper to the orator's speech; nor calmly wait till he is pleased to come to the point, but call upon him to return, and openly testify their impatience whenever he seems disposed to wander from the question. Who, I beseech you, would, in our

days, endure an orator, who should open his harangue with a tedious apology for the weakness of his constitution? Yet almost every oration of Corvinus sets out in that manner. Would any man *now* have patience to hear out the five long books against Verres? or those endless volumes of pleading in favour of Tully, or Cæcina? The vivacity of our modern judges even prevents the speaker; and they are apt to conceive some sort of prejudice against all he utters, unless he has the address to bribe their attention by the strength and spirit of his arguments, the liveliness of his sentiments, or the elegance and brilliancy of his descriptions. The very populace have some notion of the beauty of language, and would no more relish the uncouthness of antiquity in a modern orator; than they would the gesture of old Roscius or Ambivius in a modern actor. Our young students too, who are forming themselves to eloquence, and for that purpose attend the courts of judicature, expect not merely to *hear*, but to carry home something worthy of remembrance: and it is usual with them not only to canvass among themselves, but to transmit to their respective provinces whatever ingenious thought or poetical ornament the orator has happily employed. For even the embellishments of poetry are now required; and those too, not copied from the heavy and antiquated manner of Attius or Pacuvius, but formed in the lively and elegant spirit of Horace, Virgil, and Lucan. Agreeably, therefore, to the superior taste and judgment of the present age, our orators appear with a more polished and graceful aspect. And most certainly it cannot be thought that their speeches are the less efficacious, because they soothe the ears of the audience with the pleasing modulation of harmonious periods. Has eloquence lost her power, because she has improved her charms? Are our temples less durable than those of old, because they are not formed of rude materials, but shine out in all the polish and splendor of the most costly ornaments?

To confess the plain truth, the effect which many of the antients have upon me, is to dispose me either to

laugh

laugh or sleep. Not to mention the more ordinary race of orators, such as Canutius, Arrius, or Fannius, with some others of the same dry and un-affecting cast; even Calvus himself scarce pleases me in more than one or two short orations: though he has left behind him, if I mistake not, no less than one and twenty volumes. And the world in general seems to join with me in the same opinion of them; for how few are the readers of his invectives against Ficinius or Drusus? Whereas those against Vatinius are in every body's hands, particularly the second, which is indeed, both in sentiment and language, a well-written piece. It is evident, therefore, that he had an idea of just composition, and rather wanted genius than inclination, to reach a more graceful and elevated manner. As to the orations of Cælius, though they are by no means valuable upon the whole, yet they have their merit, so far as they approach to the exalted elegance of the present times. Whenever, indeed, his composition is careless and unconnected, his expression low, and his sentiments gross; it is then he is truly an antient: and I will venture to affirm, there is no one so fond of antiquity as to admire him in that part of his character. We may allow Cæsar, on account of the great affairs in which he was engaged; as we may Brutus, in consideration of his philosophy, to be less eloquent than might otherwise be expected of such superior geniuses. The truth is, even their warmest admirers acknowledge, that as orators they by no means shine with the same lustre which distinguished every other part of their reputation. Cæsar's speech in favour of Decius, and that of Brutus in behalf of King Dejotarus, with some others of the same coldness and languor, have scarcely, I imagine, met with any readers; unless, perhaps, among such who can relish their verses. For verses, we know, they writ, (and published too) I will not say with more spirit, but undoubtedly with more success, than Cicero, because they had the good fortune to fall into much fewer hands. Afranius, one would guess, by his air, and manner, to have been contemporary with Menenius, and Appius; though in fact he lived much nearer to

our times. It is visible he was a close imitator of Attius and Pacuvius, not only in his tragedies, but also in his orations; so remarkably dry and unpolished are all his compositions! But the beauty of eloquence, like that of the human form, consists in the smoothness, strength, and colour of its several parts. Corvinus I am inclined to spare; though it was his own fault that he did not equal the elegant refinements of modern compositions, as it must be acknowledged his genius was abundantly sufficient for that purpose.

The next I shall take notice of, is Cicero; who had the same contest with those of his own times, as mine, my friends, with you. They, it seems, were favourers of the antients; whilst He preferred the eloquence of his contemporaries: and, in truth, he excels the orators of his own age in nothing more remarkably, than in the solidity of his judgment. He was the first who set a polish upon oratory; who seemed to have any notion of delicacy of expression, and the art of composition. Accordingly he attempted a more florid style: as he now and then breaks out into some lively flashes of wit; particularly in his later performances, when much practice and experience (those best and surest guides) had taught him a more improved manner. But his earlier compositions are not without the blemishes of antiquity. He is tedious in his exordiums, too circumstantial in his narrations, and careless in retrenching luxuriances. He seems not easily affected, and is but rarely fired; as his periods are seldom either properly rounded, or happily pointed: he has nothing, in fine, you would wish to make your own. His speeches, like a rude edifice, have strength, indeed, and permanency; but are destitute of that elegance and splendor which are necessary to render them perfectly agreeable. The orator, however, in his compositions, as the man of wealth in his buildings, should consider ornament as well as use: his structure should be, not only substantial, but striking; and his furniture not merely convenient, but rich, and such as will bear a close and frequent inspection; whilst every thing that has a mean and awkward appearance ought to be totally banished.

Let

Let our orator then reject every expression that is obsolete, and grown rusty, as it were, by age: let him be careful not to weaken the force of his sentiments by a heavy and inartificial combination of words, like our dull compilers of annals: let him avoid all low and insipid raillery; in a word, let him vary the structure of his periods, nor end every sentence with the same uniform close.

I will not expose the meanness of Cicero's conceits, nor his affectation of concluding almost every other period with, *as it should seem*, instead of pointing them with some lively and spirited turn. I mention even these with reluctance, and pass over many others of the same injudicious cast. It is singly, however, in little affectations of this kind, that they who are pleased to style themselves *antient orators* seem to admire and imitate him. I shall content myself with describing their characters, without mentioning their names: but, you are sensible, there are certain pretenders to taste who prefer Lucilius to Horace, and Lucretius to Virgil; who hold the eloquence of your favourite Bassus or Nonianus in the utmost contempt, when compared with that of Sisenna or Varro; in a word, who despise the productions of our modern rhetoricians, yet are in raptures with those of Calvus. These curious orators prate in the courts of judicature after the *manner of the antients*, (as they call it) till they are deserted by the whole audience, and are scarce supportable even to their very clients. The truth of it is, that soundness of eloquence which they so much boast, is but an evidence of the natural weakness of their genius, as it is the effect alone of tame and cautious art. No physician would pronounce a man to enjoy a proper constitution, whose health proceeded entirely from a studied and abstemious regimen. To be only not indisposed, is but a small acquisition; it is spirits, vivacity, and vigour, that I require: whatever comes short of this, is but one remove from imbecillity.

Be it then (as with great ease it may, and in fact is) the glorious distinction of you, my illustrious friends, to en-

noble our age with the most refined eloquence. It is with infinite satisfaction, Messalla, I observe, that you single out the most florid among the antients for your model. And you, my other two ingenious friends*, so happily unite strength of sentiment with beauty of expression; such a pregnancy of imagination, such a symmetry of ordonnance distinguish your speeches; so copious or so concise is your elocution, as different occasions require; such an inimitable gracefulness of style, and such an easy flow of wit, adorn and dignify your compositions: in a word, so absolutely you command the passions of your audience, and so happily temper your own, that, however the envy and malignity of the present age may withhold that applause which is so justly your due, posterity, you may rely upon it, will speak of you in the advantageous terms which you well deserve.

When Aper had thus finished—It must be owned, said Maternus, our friend has spoken with much force and spirit. What a torrent of learning and eloquence has he poured forth in defence of the moderns! and how completely vanquished the antients with those very weapons which he borrowed from them! However, continued he, applying himself to Messalla, you must not recede from your engagement. Not that we expect you should enter into a defence of the antients, or suppose (however Aper is pleased to compliment) that any of us can stand in competition with them. Aper himself does not sincerely think so, I dare say; but takes the opposite side in the debate, merely in imitation of the celebrated manner of antiquity. We do not desire you, therefore, to entertain us with a panegyric upon the antients: their well-established reputation places them far above the want of our encomiums. But what we request of you is, to account for our having so widely departed from that noble species of eloquence which they displayed: especially since we are not, according to Aper's calculation, more than a hundred and twenty years distant from Cicero.

I shall endeavour, returned Messalla, to pursue the plan you have laid

down to me. I shall not enter into the question with Aper, (though indeed he is the first that ever made it one) whether those who flourished above a century before us, can properly be styled antients. I am not disposed to contend about words: let them be called antients, or ancestors, or whatever other name he pleases, so it be allowed their oratory was superior to ours. I admit too, what he just now advanced, that there are various kinds of eloquence discernible in the same period; much more in different ages. But as among the Attic orators, Demosthenes is placed in the first rank, then Æschines, Hyperides next, and after him Lysias and Lycurgus; an era, which on all hands is agreed to have been the prime season of oratory; so amongst us, Cicero is by universal consent preferred to all his contemporaries; as after him, Calvus, Asinius, Cæsar, Cælius, and Brutus, are justly acknowledged to have excelled all our preceding or subsequent orators. Nor is it of any importance to the present argument, that they differ in manner, since they agree in kind. The compositions of Calvus, it is confessed, are distinguished by their remarkable conciseness; as those of Asinius are by the harmonious flow of his language. Brilliancy of sentiment is Cæsar's characteristic; as poignancy of wit is that of Cælius. Solidity recommends the speeches of Brutus; while copiousness, strength; and vehemence, are the predominant qualities in Cicero. Each of them, however, displays an equal soundness of eloquence: and one may easily discover a general resemblance and kindred likeness run through their several works, though diversified, indeed, according to their respective geniuses. That they mutually detracted from each other, (as it must be owned there are some remaining traces of malignity in their letters) is not to be imputed to them as orators, but as men. Calvus, Asinius, and even Cicero himself, were liable, no doubt, to be infected with jealousy, as well as with other human frailties and imperfections. Brutus, however, I will singly except from all imputations of malignity, as I am persuaded he spoke the sincere and impartial sentiments of his heart: for can it be supposed that

He should envy Cicero, who does not seem to have envied even Cæsar himself? As to Galba, Lælius, and some others of the antients, whom Aper has thought proper to condemn, I am willing to admit that they have some defects, which must be ascribed to a growing and yet immature eloquence.

After all, if we must relinquish the nobler kind of oratory, and adopt some lower species, I should certainly prefer the impetuosity of Gracchus, or the incorrectness of Crassus, to the studied foppery of Mæcenas, or the childish jingle of Gallio: so much rather would I see eloquence clothed in the most rude and negligent garb, than decked out with the false colours of affected ornament! There is something in our present manner of elocution, which is so far from being oratorical, that it is not even manly; and one would imagine our modern pleaders, by the levity of their wit, the affected smoothness of their periods, and licentiousness of their style, had a view to the stage in all their compositions. Accordingly, some of them are not ashamed to boast (which one can scarce even mention without a blush) that their speeches are adapted to the soft modulation of stage-music. It is this depravity of taste which has given rise to the very indecent and preposterous, though very frequent, expression, that such an orator speaks *smoothly*, and such a dancer moves *elegantly*. I am willing to admit, therefore, that Cassius Severus, (the single modern whom Aper has thought proper to name) when compared to these his degenerate successors, may justly be deemed an orator; though, it is certain, in the greater part of his compositions there appears far more strength than spirit. He was the first who neglected chastity of style, and propriety of method. Inexpert in the use of those very weapons with which he engages, he ever lays himself open to a thrust, by always endeavouring to attack; and one may much more properly say of him, that he pushes at random, than that he comports himself according to the just rules of regular combat. Nevertheless, he is greatly superior, as I observed before, in the variety of his learning, the agreeableness of his wit, and the strength of his genius, to those who succeeded him; not one of whom, however,

however, has Aper ventured to bring into the field. I imagined, that after having deposed Asinius, and Cælius, and Calvus, he would have substituted another set of orators in their place, and that he had numbers to produce in opposition to Cicero, to Cæsar, and the rest whom he rejected; or at least, one rival to each of them. On the contrary, he has distinctly and separately censured all the antients, while he has ventured to commend the moderns in general only. He thought, perhaps, if he singled out some, he should draw upon himself the resentment of all the rest: for every declaimer among them modestly ranks himself, in his own fond opinion, before Cicero, though indeed after Gabinianus. But what Aper was not hardy enough to undertake, I will be bold to execute for him; and draw out his oratorical heroes in full view, that it may appear by what degrees the spirit and vigour of antient eloquence was impaired and broken.

Let me rather intreat you,' said Maternus, interrupting him, 'to enter, without any farther preface, upon the difficulty you first undertook to clear. That we are inferior to the antients in point of eloquence, I by no means want to have proved, being entirely of that opinion; but my present enquiry is how to account for our sinking so far below them? A question, it seems, you have examined, and which I am persuaded you would discuss with much calmness, if Aper's unmerciful attack upon your favourite orators had not a little discomposed you.'—'I am nothing offended,' returned Messalla, 'with the sentiments which Aper has advanced; neither ought you, my friends, remembering always that it is an established law in debates of this kind, that every man may with entire security disclose his unreserved opinion.'—'Proceed then, I beseech you,' replied Maternus, 'to the examination of this point concerning the antients, with a freedom equal to theirs: from which I suspect, alas! we have more widely degenerated, than even from their eloquence.'

'The cause,' said Messalla, resuming his discourse, 'does not lie very remote; and, though you are pleased to call upon me to assign it, is well known, I doubt not, both to you and to the

rest of this company. For is it not obvious that Eloquence, together with the rest of the politer arts, has fallen from her antient glory, not for want of admirers, but through the dissoluteness of our youth, the negligence of parents, the ignorance of preceptors, and the universal disregard of antient manners? Evils, which derived their source from Rome, and thence spread themselves through Italy, and over all the provinces; though the mischief, indeed, is most observable within our own walls. I shall take notice, therefore, of those vices to which the youth of this city are more peculiarly exposed; which rise upon them, in number as they increase in years. But before I enter farther into this subject, let me premise an observation or two concerning the judicious method of discipline practised by our ancestors, in training up their children.

In the first place, then, the virtuous matrons of those wiser ages did not abandon their infants to the mean hovels of mercenary nurses, but tenderly reared them up at their own breasts; esteeming the careful regulation of their children and domestic concerns as the highest point of female merit. It was customary with them likewise to chuse out some elder female relation, of approved conduct, with whom the family in general entrusted the care of their respective children, during their infant years. This venerable person strictly regulated, not only their more serious pursuits, but even their very amusements; restraining them, by her respected presence, from saying or acting any thing contrary to decency and good manners. In this manner, we are informed, Cornelia the mother of the two Gracchi, as also Aurelia and Attia, to whom Julius and Augustus Cæsar owed their respective births, undertook this office of family education, and trained up those several noble youths to whom they were related. This method of discipline was attended with one very singular advantage: the minds of young men were conducted sound and untainted to the study of the noble arts. Accordingly, whatever profession they determined upon, whether that of arms, eloquence, or law, they entirely devoted themselves to that single pursuit, and with undi-

‘ fipated application, poffeffed the whole
‘ compafs of their chofen fcience.

‘ But, in the prefent age, the little
‘ boy is delegated to the care of fome
‘ paitry Greek chamber-maid, in con-
‘ junction with two or three other fer-
‘ vants, (and even thofe generally of
‘ the worft kind) who are abfolutely un-
‘ fit for every rational and ferious of-
‘ fice. From the idle tales and grofs
‘ abfurdities of thefe worthlefs people,
‘ the tender and uninstructed mind is
‘ fuffered to receive it’s earlieft impres-
‘ fions. It cannot, indeed, be fupposed,
‘ that any caution fhould be obferved
‘ among the domeftics; fince the parents
‘ themfelves are fo far from training
‘ their young families to virtue and mo-
‘ dety, that they fet them the firft ex-
‘ amples of luxury and licentiousnefs.
‘ Thus our youth gradually acquire a
‘ confirmed habit of impudence, and a
‘ total difregard of that reverence they
‘ owe both to themfelves and to others.
‘ To fay truth, it feems as if a fondnefs
‘ for horfes, actors, and gladiators, the
‘ peculiar and diftinguifhing folly of
‘ this our city, was impreffed upon
‘ them even in the womb: and when
‘ once a paffion of this contemptible
‘ fort has feized and engaged the mind,
‘ what opening is there left for the no-
‘ ble arts?’

‘ All converfation in general is in-
‘ fected with topics of this kind; as
‘ they are the conftant fubjects of dif-
‘ courfe, not only amongst our youth
‘ in their academies, but even of their
‘ tutors themfelves. For it is not by
‘ eftablifhing a ftrict difcipline, or by
‘ giving proofs of their genius, that this
‘ order of men gain pupils: it is by the
‘ meaneft compliances and moft iervile
‘ flattery. Not to mention how ill in-
‘ structed our youth are in the very ele-
‘ ments of literature, fufficient pains
‘ is by no means taken in bringing them
‘ acquainted with the beft authors, or
‘ in giving them a proper notion of his-
‘ tory, together with a knowledge of
‘ men and things. The whole that feems
‘ to be confidered in their education, is,
‘ to find out a perfon for them called a
‘ Rhetorician. I fhall take occafion im-
‘ mediately to give you fome account of
‘ the rife and progrefs of this profeflion
‘ in Rome; and fhew you with what
‘ contempt it was received by our an-
‘ ceftors. But it will be neceffary to
‘ lay before you a previous view of that

‘ fcheme of difcipline which the antient
‘ orators praftifed; of whose amazing
‘ induftry and unwearied application to
‘ every branch of the polite arts, we meet
‘ with many remarkable accounts in
‘ their own writings.

‘ I need not inform you, that Cicero,
‘ in the latter end of his treatife intitled
‘ Brutus, (the former part of which is
‘ employed in commemorating the an-
‘ tient orators) gives a fketoh of the
‘ feveral progrefive fteps by which he
‘ formed his eloquence. He there ac-
‘ quaints us, that he ftudied the civil
‘ law under Q. Mucius; that he was in-
‘ structed in the feveral branches of phi-
‘ lofophy by Philo the Academic, and
‘ Diodorus the Stoic; that not fatisfied
‘ with attending the lectures of thofe
‘ eminent mafters, of which there were
‘ at that time great numbers in Rome,
‘ he made a voyage into Greece and
‘ Afa, in order to enlarge his know-
‘ ledge, and embrace the whole circle
‘ of fciences. Accordingly he appears
‘ by his writings to have been mafter
‘ of logic, ethics, aftronomy, and na-
‘ tural philofophy, befides being well
‘ verfed in geometry, mufic, grammar,
‘ and, in fhort, in every one of the fine
‘ arts. For thus it is, my worthy
‘ friends; from deep learning and the
‘ united confluent of the arts and
‘ fciences, the refiftlefs torrent of that
‘ amazing eloquence derived it’s ftrength
‘ and rapidity.

‘ The faculties of the orator are not
‘ exercifed, indeed, as in other fciences,
‘ within certain precife and determinate
‘ limits: on the contrary, eloquence is
‘ the moft comprehensive of the whole
‘ circle of arts. Thus he alone can
‘ juftly be deemed an orator, who
‘ knows how to employ the moft per-
‘ fuafive arguments upon every quef-
‘ tion; who can exprefs himfelf fuitably
‘ to the dignity of his fubject, with all
‘ the powers of grace and harmony; in
‘ a word, who can penetrate into every
‘ minute circumftance, and manage the
‘ whole train of incidents to the great-
‘ eft advantage of his caufe. Such, at
‘ leaft, was the high idea which the an-
‘ tients formed of this illuftrious cha-
‘ racter. In order however to attain
‘ this eminent qualification, they did
‘ not think it neceffary to declaim in the
‘ fchools, and idly wafte their breath up-
‘ on feigned or frivolous controverfies.
‘ It was their wifer method to apply
‘ themfelves

‘ themselves to the study of such useful arts as concern life and manners, as treat of moral good and evil, of justice and injustice, of the decent and the unbecoming in actions. And, indeed, it is upon points of this nature that the business of an orator principally turns. For example, in the judiciary kind it relates to matters of equity; as in the deliberate it is employed in determining the fit and the expedient: still, however, these two branches are not so absolutely distinct, but that they are frequently blended with each other. Now it is impossible, when questions of this kind fall under the consideration of an orator, to enlarge upon them in all the elegant and enlivening spirit of an efficacious eloquence, unless he is perfectly well acquainted with human nature; unless he understands the power and extent of moral duties, and can distinguish those actions which do not partake either of vice or virtue.

‘ From the same source, likewise, he must derive his influence over the passions. For if he is skilled, for instance, in the nature of indignation, he will be so much the more capable of soothing or enflaming the breasts of his judges: if he knows wherein compassion consists, and by what workings of the heart it is moved, he will the more easily raise that tender affection of the soul. An orator trained up in this discipline, and practised in these arts, will have full command over the breasts of his audience, in whatever disposition it may be his chance to find them: and thus furnished with all the numberless powers of persuasion, will judiciously vary and accommodate his eloquence, as particular circumstances and conjunctures shall require. There are some, we find, who are most struck with that manner of elocution, where the arguments are drawn up in a short and close style; upon such an occasion the orator will experience the great advantage of being conversant in logic. Others, on the contrary, admire flowing and diffusive periods, where the illustrations are borrowed from the ordinary and familiar images of common observation: here the Peripatetic writers will give him some assistance; as indeed they will, in general, supply him with many useful hints in all the different methods of popular address.

‘ The Academics will inspire him with a becoming warmth: Plato with sublimity of sentiments, and Xenophon with an easy and elegant diction. Even the exclamatory manner of Epicurus, or Metrodorus, may be found, in some circumstances, not altogether unserviceable. In a word, what the Stoics pretend of their wise men, ought to be verified in our orator; and he should actually possess all human knowledge. Accordingly, the ancients who applied themselves to eloquence, not only studied the civil laws, but also grammar, poetry, music, and geometry. Indeed, there are few causes (perhaps I might justly say there are none) wherein a skill in the first is not absolutely necessary; as there are many in which an acquaintance with the last mentioned sciences is highly requisite.

‘ If it should be objected, that “Eloquence is the single science requisite for the orator; as an occasional recourse to the others will be sufficient for all his purposes:” I answer; in the first place, there will always be a remarkable difference in the manner of applying what we take up, as it were, upon loan, and what we properly possess; so that it will ever be manifest, whether the orator is indebted to others for what he produces, or derives it from his own unborrowed fund. And in the next, the sciences throw an inexpressible grace over our compositions, even where they are not immediately concerned; as their effects are discernible where we least expect to find them. This powerful charm is not only distinguished by the learned and the judicious, but strikes even the most common and popular class of auditors; inasmuch that one may frequently hear them applauding a speaker of this improved kind, as a man of genuine erudition; as enriched with the whole treasures of eloquence; and, in one word, acknowledge the complete orator. But I will take the liberty to affirm, that no man ever did, nor indeed ever can, maintain that exalted character, unless he enters the forum supported by the full strength of the united arts. Accomplishments, however, of this sort, are now so totally neglected, that the pleadings of our orators are debased by the lowest expressions; as a general ignorance
‘ both

both of the laws of our country and the acts of the senate, is visible throughout their performances. All knowledge of the rights and customs of Rome is professedly ridiculed, and philosophy seems at present to be considered as something that ought to be shunned and dreaded. Thus Eloquence, like a dethroned potentate, is banished her rightful dominions, and confined to barren points and low conceits? and she who was once mistress of the whole circle of sciences, and charmed every beholder with the goodly appearance of her glorious train, is now stripped of all her attendants, (I had almost said of all her genius) and seems as one of the meanest of the mechanic arts. This, therefore, I consider as the first, and the principal reason of our having so greatly declined from the spirit of the antients.

If I were called upon to support my opinion by authorities, might I not justly name, among the Grecians, Demosthenes? who, we are informed, constantly attended the lectures of Plato: as among our own countrymen, Cicero himself assures us, (and in these very words, if I rightly remember) That he owed whatever advances he had made in eloquence, not to the Rhetoricians, but to the Academic philosophers.

Other, and very considerable, reasons might be produced for the decay of eloquence. But I leave them, my friends, as it is proper I should, to be mentioned by you; having performed my share in the examination of this question: and with a freedom, which will give, I imagine, as usual, much offence. I am sure, at least, if certain of our contemporaries were to be informed of what I have here maintained, I should be told, that in laying it down as a maxim, That a knowledge both of law and philosophy are essential qualifications in an orator, I have been fondly pursuing a phantom of my own imagination.

I am so far from thinking, replied Maternus, you have completed the part you undertook, that I should rather imagine you had only given us the first general sketch of your design. You have marked out to us, indeed, those sciences wherein the antient orators were instructed, and have placed

in strong contrast their successful industry, with our unperforming ignorance. But something farther still remains: and as you have shewn us the superior acquirements of the orators in those more improved ages of eloquence, as well as the remarkable deficiency of those in our own times, I should be glad you would proceed to acquaint us with the particular exercises by which the youth of those earlier days were wont to strengthen and improve their geniuses. For I dare say you will not deny, that oratory is acquired by practice far better than by precept: and our other two friends here seem willing, I perceive, to admit it.

To which, when Aper and Secundus had signified their assent, Messalla resuming his discourse, continued as follows:

Having, then, as it should seem, disclosed to your satisfaction the seeds and first principles of antient eloquence, by specifying the several kinds of arts to which the ancient orators were trained; I shall now lay before you the method they pursued, in order to gain a facility in the exertion of eloquence. This, indeed, I have in some measure anticipated, by mentioning the preparatory arts to which they applied themselves: for it is impossible to make any progress in a compass so various and so abstruse, unless we not only strengthen our knowledge by reflection, but improve a general aptitude by frequent exercise. Thus it appears that the same steps must be pursued in exerting our Oratory, as in attaining it. But if this truth should not be universally admitted; if any should think, that Eloquence may be possessed without paying previous court to her attendant sciences; most certainly, at least, it will not be denied, that a mind duly impregnated with the polite arts, will enter with so much the more advantage upon those exercises peculiar to the oratorical circus.

Accordingly, our ancestors, when they designed a young man for the profession of Eloquence, having previously taken due care of his domestic education, and seasoned his mind with useful knowledge, introduced him to the most eminent orator in Rome. From that time the youth commenced

his

his constant follower, attending him upon all occasions, whether he appeared in the public assemblies of the people, or in the courts of civil judicature. Thus he learned, if I may use the expression, the arts of oratorical conflict in the very field of battle. The advantages which flowed from this method were considerable: it animated the courage and quickened the judgment of youth, thus to receive their instructions in the eye of the world, and in the midst of affairs; when no man could advance an absurd or a weak argument without being rejected by the bench, exposed by his adversary, and, in a word, despised by the whole audience. By this method they imbibed the pure and uncorrupted streams of genuine eloquence. But though they chiefly attached themselves to one particular orator, they heard, likewise, all the rest of their contemporary pleaders, in many of their respective debates. Hence, also, they had an opportunity of acquainting themselves with the various sentiments of the people, and of observing what pleased or disgusted them most in the several orators of the forum. By this means they were supplied with an instructor of the best and most improving kind, exhibiting, not the feigned semblance of Eloquence, but her real and lively manifestation: not a pretended, but a genuine adversary, armed in earnest for the combat, an audience ever full and ever new, composed of foes as well as friends, and where not a single expression could fall uncensured, or unapplauded. For you will agree with me, I am well persuaded, when I assert that a solid and lasting reputation of Eloquence must be acquired by the censure of our enemies, as well as by the applause of our friends; or rather, indeed, it is from the former that it derives it's surest and most unquestioned strength and firmness. Accordingly, a youth thus formed to the bar, a frequent and attentive hearer of the most illustrious orators and debates, instructed by the experience of others, acquainted with the popular taste, and daily conversant in the laws of his country; to whom

the solemn presence of the judges, and the awful eyes of a full audience, were familiar, rose at once into affairs, and was equal to every cause. Hence it was that Crassus at the age of nineteen, Cæsar at twenty-one, Pollio at twenty-two, and Calvus when he was but a few years older, pronounced those several speeches against Carbo, Dolabella, Cato, and Varinius, which we read to this hour with admiration.

On the other hand, our modern youth receive their education under certain declaimers called Rhetoricians: a set of men who made their first appearance in Rome a little before the time of Cicero. And that they were by no means approved by our ancestors plainly appears from their being enjoined under the censorship of Crassus and Domitius, to shut by their schools of *impudence*, as Cicero expresses it.—But I was going to say, we are sent to certain academies, where it is hard to determine whether the place, the company, or the method of instruction, is most likely to infect the minds of young people, and produce a wrong turn of thought. For nothing, certainly, can there be of an affecting solemnity in an audience, where all who compose it are of the same low degree of understanding; nor any advantage to be received from their fellow-students, where a parcel of boys and raw youths of unripe judgments harangue before each other, without the least fear or danger of criticism. And as for their exercises, they are ridiculous in their very nature. They consist of two kinds, and are either declamatory or controversial. The first, as being easier and requiring less skill, is assigned to the younger lads: the other is the task of more mature years. But, good gods! with what incredible absurdity are they composed! The truth is, the style of their declamations is as false and contemptible, as the subjects are useless and fictitious. Thus, being taught to harangue in a most pompous diction, on the rewards due to tyrannicides, on the election to be made by deflowered virgins*, on the licentiousness of married women, on the cere-

* It was one of the questions usually debated in these rhetoric schools, whether the party who had been ravished should chuse to marry the violator of her chastity, or rather have him put to death.

monies to be observed in times of pestilence, with other topics of the same unconcerning kind, which are daily debated in the schools, and scarce ever at the bar; "they appear absolute novices in the affairs of the world, and are by much too elevated for common life."

"Here Messalla paused: when Secundus, taking his turn in the conversation, began with observing, that"

"—The true and lofty spirit of genuine eloquence, like that of a clear and vigorous flame, is nourished by proper fuel, excited by agitation, and still brightens as it burns. It was in this manner," said he, "that the oratory of our ancestors was kindled and spread itself. The moderns have as much merit of this kind, perhaps, as can be acquired under a settled and peaceable government: but far inferior, no doubt, to that which shone out in the times of licentiousness and confusion, when he was deemed the noblest orator, who had most influence over a restless and ungoverned multitude. To this situation of public affairs was owing those continual debates concerning the Agrarian laws, and the popularity consequent thereupon; those long harangues of the magistrates, those impeachments of the great, those factions of the nobles, those hereditary enmities in particular families, and, in fine, those incessant struggles between the senate and the commons: which, though each of them prejudicial to the state, yet most certainly contributed to produce and encourage that rich vein of Eloquence which discovered itself in those tempestuous days. The way to dignities lay directly thro' the paths of Eloquence. The more a man signalized himself by his abilities in this art, so much the more easily he opened his road to preferment, and maintained an ascendant over his colleagues, at the same time that it

heightened his interest with the nobles, his authority with the senate, and his reputation with the people in general. The patronage of these admired orators was courted even by foreign nations; as the several magistrates of our own endeavoured to recommend themselves to their favour and protection, by shewing them the highest marks of honour whenever they set out for the administration of their respective provinces, and by studiously cultivating a friendship with them at their return. They were called upon, without any solicitation on their own part, to fill up the supreme dignities of the state. Nor were they even in a private station without great power, as by means of the persuasive arts they had a very considerable influence over both the senate and the people. The truth is, it was an established maxim in those days, that without the oratorical talents, no man could either acquire or maintain any high post in the government. And no wonder, indeed, that such notion should universally prevail; since it was impossible for any person endued with this commanding art, to pass his life in obscurity, how much soever it might be agreeable to his own inclinations; since it was not sufficient merely to vote in the senate, without supporting that vote with good-sense and eloquence; since in all public impeachments or civil causes, the accused was obliged to answer to the charge in his own person; since written depositions were not admitted in judicial matters, but the witnesses were called upon to deliver their evidence in open court. Thus our ancestors were eloquent, as much by necessity as by encouragements. To be possessed of the persuasive talents, was esteemed the highest glory; as the contrary character was held in the utmost contempt. In a word, they were

* The latter part of Messalla's discourse, together with what immediately followed it in the original, is lost; the chasm, however, does not seem to be so great as some of the commentators suspect. The translator therefore has ventured to fill it up in his own way with those lines which are distinguished by inverted commas. He has likewise given the next subsequent part of the conversation to Secundus, though it does not appear in the original to whom it belongs. It would be of no great importance to the English reader to justify this last article; though, perhaps, it would not be very difficult, if it were necessary.

To save the reader the trouble of turning to a second note upon a like occasion, it is proper to observe in this place, that he will find the same inverted commas in p. 118. The words included between them are also an addition of the translator's, and for the same reason as that just now mentioned.

incited

incited to the pursuit of oratory by a principle of honour as well as by a view of interest. They dreaded the disgrace of being considered rather as clients than patrons; of losing those dependents which their ancestors had transmitted to them, and seeing them mix in the train of others; in short, of being looked upon as men of mean abilities, and consequently either passed over in the disposal of high offices, or despised in the administration of them.

I know not whether those antient historical pieces, which were lately collected and published by Mucianus from the old libraries where they have hitherto been preserved, have yet fallen into your hands. This collection consists of eleven volumes of the public journals, and three of epistles; by which it appears that Pompey and Crassus gained as much advantage from their eloquence as their arms; that Lucullus, Metellus, Lentulus, Curio, and the rest of those distinguished chiefs, devoted themselves with great application to this insinuating art: in a word, that not a single person in those times rose to any considerable degree of power, without the assistance of the rhetorical talents.

To these considerations may be farther added, that the dignity and importance of the debates in which the antients were engaged, contributed greatly to advance their eloquence. Most certain, indeed, it is, that an orator must necessarily find great difference with respect to his powers, when he is to harangue only upon some trifling robbery, or a little paltry form of pleading; and when the faculties of his mind are warmed and enlivened by such interesting and animating topics as bribery at elections, as the oppression of our allies, or the massacre of our fellow-citizens. Evils these, which, beyond all peradventure, it were better should never happen; and we have reason to rejoice that we live under a government where we are strangers to such terrible calamities: still it must be acknowledged, that wherever they did happen, they were wonderful incentives to eloquence. For the orator's genius rises and expands itself in proportion to the dignity of the occasion upon which it is exerted: and I will lay it down as a

maxim, that it is impossible to shine out in all the powerful lustre of genuine eloquence, without being inflamed by a suitable importance of subject. Thus the speech of Demosthenes against his guardians, scarcely, I imagine, established his character; as it was not the defence of Archias, or Quinctius, that acquired Cicero the reputation of a consummate orator. It was Catiline, and Milo, and Verres, and Mark Antony, that warmed him with that noble glow of eloquence, which gave the finishing brightness to his unequalled fame. Far am I from insinuating, that such infamous characters deserve to be tolerated in a state, in order to supply convenient matter of oratory: all I contend for is, that this art flourishes to most advantage in turbulent times. Peace, no doubt, is infinitely preferable to war; but it is the latter only that forms the soldier. It is just the same with Eloquence: the oftener she enters, if I may so say, the field of battle, the more wounds she gives and receives; the more powerful the adversary with which she contends, so much the more ennobled she appears in the eye of mankind. For it is the disposition of human nature, always to admire what we see is attended with danger and difficulty in others, how much soever we may chuse ease and security for ourselves.

Another advantage which the antient orators had over the moderns, is, that they were not confined in their pleadings, as we are, to a few hours. On the contrary, they were at liberty to adjourn as often as they thought proper; they were unlimited as to the number of days or of counsel, and every orator might extend his speech to the length most agreeable to himself. Pompey, in his third consulship, was the first who curbed the spirit of eloquence; still, however, permitting all causes to be heard, agreeably to the laws, in the forum and before the Prætors. How much more considerable the business of those magistrates was, than that of the Centumvirs, who at present determine all causes, is evident from this circumstance, that not a single oration of Cicero, Cæsar, or Brutus, or, in short, of any one celebrated orator, was spoken before these last, excepting only those of Pollio in favour of the heirs of

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• Urbinia.

‘ Urbinia. But then it must be remembered, that these were delivered about the middle of the reign of Augustus, when a long and uninterrupted peace abroad, a perfect tranquillity at home, together with the general good conduct of that wise prince, had damped the flames of eloquence as well as those of sedition.

‘ You will smile, perhaps, at what I am going to say, and I mention it for that purpose: but is there not something in the present confined garb of our orators, that has an ill effect even upon their elocution, and makes it appear low and contemptible? May we not suppose, likewise, that much of the spirit of Oratory is sunk, by that close and despicable scene wherein many of our causes now are debated? For the orator, like a generous steed, requires a free and open space wherein to expatiate; otherwise the force of his powers is broken, and half the energy of his talents is checked in their career. There is another circumstance also exceedingly prejudicial to the interest of Eloquence, as it prevents a due attention to it: we are now obliged to enter upon our speech whenever the judge calls upon us; not to mention the frequent interruptions which arise by the examination of witnesses. Besides, the courts of judicature are at present so unfrequented, that the orator seems to stand alone, and talk to bare walls. But Eloquence rejoices in the clamour of loud applause, and exults in a full audience, such as used to press round the ancient orators when the forum stood thronged with nobles; when a numerous retinue of clients, when foreign ambassadors, and whole cities, assisted at the debate; and when even Rome herself was concerned in the event. The very appearance of that prodigious concourse of people, which attended the trials of Bestia, Cornelius, Scaurus, Milo, and Vatinius, must have enflamed the breast of the coldest orator. Accordingly we find, that of all the ancient orations now extant, there are none which have more eminently distinguished their authors, than those which were pronounced under such favourable circumstances. To these advantages we may farther add, likewise, the frequent general assemblies of the people, the privilege of

‘ arraigning the most considerable personages, and the popularity of such impeachments; when the sons of Oratory spared not even Scipio, Sylla, or Pompey; and when in consequence of such acceptable attacks upon suspected power, they were sure of being heard by the people with the utmost attention and regard. How must these united causes contribute to raise the genius, and inspire the eloquence of the ancients!

‘ Maternus, who, you will remember, was in the midst of his harangue in favour of Poetry when Messalla first entered into the room, finding Secundus was now silent, took that opportunity of resuming his invective against the exercise of the oratorical arts in general.” ‘ That species of eloquence,’ said he, ‘ wherein poetry is concerned, is calm and peaceable, moderate and virtuous: whereas that other supreme kind which my two friends here have been describing, as the offspring of licentiousness (by fools miscalled liberty) and the companion of sedition; bold, obstinate and haughty, unknowing how to yield or how to obey, an encourager of a lawless populace, and a stranger in all well-regulated communities. Who ever heard of an orator in Lacedæmon or Crete? cities which exercised the severest discipline, and were governed by the strictest laws. We have no account of Persian or Macedonian eloquence, or indeed of that of any other state which submitted to a regular administration of government. Whereas Rhodes and Athens (places of popular rule, where all things lay open to all men) swarmed with orators innumerable. In the same manner, Rome, while she was under no settled policy; while she was torn with parties, dissensions, and factions; while there was no peace in the forum, no harmony in the senate, no moderation in the judges; while there was neither reverence paid to superiors, nor bounds prescribed to magistrates—Rome, under these circumstances, produced, beyond all dispute, a stronger and brighter vein of eloquence; as some valuable plants will flourish even in the wildest soil. But the tongue of the Gracchi did nothing compensate the republic for their seditious laws; nor the superior eloquence of Cicero
‘ make

' make him any amends for his sad catastrophe.

' The truth is, the forum (that single remain which now survives of ancient oratory) is, even in its present situation, an evident proof that all things amongst us are not conducted in that well-ordered manner one could wish. For, tell me, is it not the guilty or the miserable alone, that fly to us for assistance? When any community implores our protection, is it not because it either is insulted by some neighbouring state, or torn by domestic feuds? And what province ever seeks our patronage, till she has been plundered or oppressed? But far better it surely is, never to have been injured, than at last to be redressed. If there was a government in the world free from commotions and disturbances, the profession of oratory would there be as useless, as that of medicine to the sound: and as the physician would have little practice or profit among the healthy and the strong, so neither would the orator have much business or honour where obedience and good manners universally prevail. To what purpose are studied speeches in a senate, where the better and the major part of the assembly are already of one mind? What the expediency of haranguing the populace, where public affairs are not determined by the voice of an ignorant and giddy multitude, but by the steady wisdom of a single person? To what end voluntary informations, where crimes are unfrequent and inconsiderable? or of la-

' boured and invidious defences, where the clemency of the judge is ever on the side of the accused? Believe me, then, my worthy (and, as far as the circumstances of the age require, my eloquent) friends, had the gods reversed the date of your existence, and placed *You* in the times of those antients we so much admire, and *Them* in yours; *You* would not have fallen short of that glorious spirit which distinguished their oratory, nor would *they* have been destitute of a proper temperature and moderation. But since a high reputation for eloquence is not consistent with great repose in the public; let every age enjoy its own peculiar advantages, without derogating from those of a former.'

Maternus having ended, Messalla observed, that there were some points which his friend had laid down, that were not perfectly agreeable to his sentiments; as there were others, which he wished to hear explained more at large—' But the time is now,' said he, ' too far advanced.'—' If I have maintained any thing,' replied Maternus, ' which requires to be opened more explicitly, I shall be ready to clear it up in some future conference.' At the same time, rising from his seat, and embracing Aper—' Messalla and I,' continued he, smiling, ' shall arraign you, be well assured, before the poets and admirers of the antients.'—' And I both of you,' returned Aper, ' before the rhetoricians.' Thus we parted in mutual good humour.

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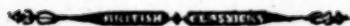
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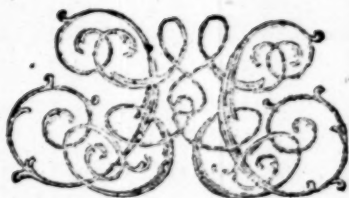
E S S A Y S

ON

MEN AND MANNERS.

BY

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, ESQ.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WALKER, N^o 16, Rosomans Street.

M D C C X C V I I .

‘ Every single observation that is published by a man of genius, be
‘ it ever so trivial, should be esteemed of importance: because
‘ he speaks from his own impressions: whereas common men
‘ publish common things, which they have perhaps gleaned from
‘ frivolous writers.’

ESSAY XXVI. N° LXIV.



ESSAYS

ON

MEN AND MANNERS.

ESSAY I.

ON PUBLICATIONS.

TIS not unamusing to consider the several apologies that people make when they commence authors. It is taken for granted that, on every publication, there is at least a seeming violation of modesty; a presumption on the writer's side, that he is able to instruct or to entertain the world; which implies a supposition that he can communicate what they cannot draw from their own reflections.

To remove any prejudice this might occasion, has been the general intent of prefaces. Some we find extremely solicitous to claim acquaintance with their reader; addressing him by the most tender and endearing appellations. He is in general styled the most loving, candid, and courteous creature, that ever breathed; with a view, doubtless, that he will deserve the compliment; and that his favour may be secured at the expense of his better judgment. Mean and idle expectation! The accidental elopements and adventures of a composition; the danger of an imperfect and surreptitious publication; the pressing and indiscreet instances of friends; the pious and well-meant frauds of acquaintance; with the irresistible commands of persons in high life; have been

excuses often substituted in place of the real motives, vanity and hunger.

The most allowable reasons for appearing thus in public are, either the advantage or amusement of our fellow-creatures, or our own private emolument and reputation.

A man possessed of intellectual talents would be more blameable in confining them to his own private use, than the mean-spirited miser, that did the same by his money. The latter is indeed obliged to bid adieu to what he communicates; the former enjoys his treasures, even while he renders others the better for them. A composition that enters the world with a view of improving or amusing it, (I mean only, amusing it in a polite or innocent way) has a claim to our utmost indulgence, even though it fail of the effect intended.

When a writer's private interest appears the motive of his publication, the reader has a larger scope for accusation, if he be a sufferer. Whoever pays for thoughts, which this kind of writers may be said to vend, has room enough to complain, if he be disappointed of his bargain. He has no revenge, but ridicule; and, contrary to the practice in other cases, to make the worst of a bad bargain.

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When the love of fame acts upon a man of genius, the case appears to stand thus. The generality of the world, distinguished by the name of readers, observe with a reluctance not unnatural, a person raising himself above them. All men have some desire of fame, and fame is grounded on comparison. Every one then is somewhat inclined to dispute his title to a superiority; and to disallow his pretensions upon the discovery of a flaw. Indeed, a fine writer, like a luminous body, may be beneficial to the person he enlightens; but it is plain, he renders the capacity of the other more discernible. Examination, however, is a sort of turnpike in the way to fame, where, though a writer be a while detained, and part with a trifle from his pocket, he finds in return a more commodious and easy road to the temple.

When, therefore, a man is conscious of ability to serve his country, or believes himself possessed of it, (for there is no

previous test on this occasion, he has no room to hesitate, or need to make apology. When self-interest inclines a man to print, he should consider that the purchaser expects a penny-worth for his penny; and has reason to asperse his honesty if he finds himself deceived. Also, that it is possible to publish a book of no value, which is too frequently the product of such mercenary people. When fame is the principal object of our devotion, it should be considered whether our character is like to gain in point of wit, what it will probably lose in point of modesty; otherwise, we shall be censured of vanity more than famed for genius; and depress our character while we strive to raise it.

After all, there is a propensity in some to communicate their thoughts without any view at all: the more sanguine of these employ the press; the less lively are contented with being impertinent in conversation.

ESSAY II.

ON THE TEST OF POPULAR OPINION.

I Happened to fall into company with a Citizen a Courtier, and an Academic.

Says the Citizen—"I am told continually of taste, refinement, and politeness; but methinks the vulgar and illiterate generally approve the same productions with the connoisseurs. One rarely finds a landscape, a building, or a play, that has charms for the critic exclusive of the mechanic. But, on the other hand, one readily remarks students who labour to be dull, depraving their native relish by the very means they use to refine it. The vulgar may not indeed be capable of giving the reasons why a composition pleases them; that mechanical distinction they leave to the connoisseur: but they are at all times, methinks, judges of the beauty of an effect, a part of knowledge in most respects allowedly more genteel than that of the operator."

Says the Courtier—"I cannot answer for every individual instance: but I think, moderately speaking, the vulgar are generally in the wrong. If they happen to be otherwise, it is

principally owing to their implicit reliance on the skill of their superiors: and this has sometimes been strangely effectual in making them imagine they relish perfection. In short, if ever they judge well, it is at the time they least presume to frame opinions for themselves.

"It is true they will pretend to taste an object which they know their betters do. But then they consider some person's judgment as a certain standard or rule; they find the object exactly tally; and this demonstrated appearance of beauty affords them some small degree of satisfaction.

"It is the same with regard to the appetite, from which the metaphor of taste is borrowed. "Such a soup or olio;" say they, "is much in vogue; and if you do not like it, you must learn to like it."

"But in poetry, for instance, it is urged that the vulgar discover the same beauties with the man of reading.

"Now half or more of the beauties of poetry depend on metaphor or allusion, neither of which, by a mind uncultivated,

‘uncultivated, can be applied to their proper counterparts. Their beauty, of consequence, is like a picture to a blind man.

‘How many of these peculiarities in poetry turn upon a knowledge of philosophy and history; and let me add, these latent beauties give the most delight to such as can unfold them.

‘I might launch out much farther in regard to the narrow limits of their apprehensions. What I have said may exclude their infallibility; and it is my opinion they are seldom right.’

The Academic spoke little, but to the purpose; asserting that all ranks and stations have their different spheres of judging: that a clown of native taste enough to relish Handel’s Messiah, might unquestionably be so instructed as to relish it yet more; that an author, before he prints, should not flatter himself

with a confused expectation of pleasing both the vulgar and the polite; few things, in comparison, being capable of doing both in any great degree: that he should always measure out his plan for the size of understanding he would fit. If he can content himself with the mob, he is pretty sure of numbers for a time. If he write with more abundant elegance, it may escape the organs of such readers; but he will have a chance for such applause as will more sensibly affect him. Let a writer then in his first performances neglect the idea of profit, and the vulgar’s applause entirely: let him address himself to the judicious few, and then profit and the mob will follow. His first appearance on the stage of letters will engross the politer compliments; and his latter will partake of the irrational huzza.

ESSAY III.

ON ALLOWING MERIT IN OTHERS.

A Certain gentleman was expressing himself as follows—

‘I confess, I have no great taste for poetry; but, if I had, I am apt to believe I should read no other poetry than that of Mr. Pope. The rest but barely arrive at a mediocrity in their art; and, to be sure, poetry of that stamp can afford but slender pleasure.’

‘I know not,’ says another, ‘what may be the gentleman’s motive to give this opinion; but I am persuaded, numbers pretend the same through mere jealousy or envy.’

A reader considers an author as one who lays claim to a superior genius. He is ever inclined to dispute it, because, if he happen to invalidate his title, he has at least one superior the less. Now though a man’s absolute merit may not depend upon the inferiority of another, yet his comparative worth varies in regard to that of other people. Self-love, therefore, is ever attentive to pursue the single point of admitting no more into the class of superiors, than it is impossible to exclude. Could it even limit the number to one, they would soon attempt to undermine him. Even Mr.

Pope had been refused his honours, but that the very constraint, and even absurdity, of people’s shutting their eyes, grew as disagreeable to them, as that excellence, which, when open, they could not but discover.

But self-love obtains it’s wishes in another respect also. It hereby not only depresses the characters of many that have wrote, but stifles the genius of such as might hereafter rise from amongst our inferiors.

Let us not deny to Mr. Pope the praises which a person enamoured of poetry would bestow on one that excelled in it: but let us consider Parnassus rather as a republic than a monarchy; where, although some may be in possession of a more cultivated spot, yet others may possess land as fruitful, upon equal cultivation.

On the whole, let us reflect, that the nature of the soil, and the extent of it’s fertility, must remain undiscovered, if the gentleman’s desponding principle should meet with approbation.

Mr. Pope’s chief excellence lies in what I would term consolidating or condensing sentences, yet preserving ease and

and perspicuity. In smoothness of verse, perhaps, he has been equalled: in regard to invention, excelled.

Add to this, if the writers of antiquity may be esteemed our truest models, Mr. Pope is much more witty, and less simple, than his own Horace appears in any of his writings. More witty, and less simple, than the modern Monsieur Boileau, who claimed the merit of uniting the style of Juvenal and Persius with that of Horace.

Satire gratifies self-love. This was one source of his popularity; and he seems even so very conscious of it, as to stigmatize many inoffensive characters.

The circumstance of what is called alliteration, and the nice adjustment of the pause, have conspired to charm the present age, but have at the same time given his verses a very cloying peculiarity.

But, perhaps, we must not expect to trace, the flow of Waller, the landscape of Thomson, the fire of Dryden, the imagery of Shakespeare, the simplicity of Spenser, the courtliness of Prior, the humour of Swift, the wit of Cowley, the delicacy of Addison, the tenderness of Otway, and the invention, the spirit and sublimity of Milton, joined in any single writer. The lovers of poetry, therefore, should allow some praise to those who shine in any branch of it, and only range them into classes according to that species in which they shine.

Quare agite, O juvenes!

Banish the self-debasing principle, and scorn the dissimulatio of readers. Humility has depressed many a genius into an hermit; but never yet raised one into a poet of eminence.

ESSAY IV.

THE IMPROMPTU.

THE critics, however unable to fix the time which it is most proper to allow for the action of an epic poem, have universally agreed that some certain space is not to be exceeded. Concerning this, Aristotle, their great Lycurgus, is entirely silent. Succeeding critics have done little more than cavil concerning the time really taken up by the greatest epic writers: that, if they could not frame a law, they might at least establish a precedent of unexceptionable authority. Homer, say they, confined the action of his Iliad, or rather his action may be reduced, to the space of two months. His Odyssey, according to Bossu and Dacier, is extended to eight years. Virgil's *Æneid* has raised very different opinions in his commentators. Tasso's poem includes a summer.—But leaving such knotty points to persons that appear born for the discussion of them, let us endeavour to establish laws that are more likely to be obeyed than controverted. An epic writer, though limited in regard to the time of his action, is under no sort of restraint with regard to the time he takes to finish his poem. Far different is the case with a writer of *Impromptu's*. He indeed is allowed all the liberties that he can possibly take in his composition, but is ri-

gidly circumscribed with regard to the space in which it is completed. And no wonder; for whatever degree of poignancy may be required in this composition, it's peculiar merit must ever be relative to the expedition with which it is produced.

It appears indeed, to me, to have the nature of that kind of fallad, which certain eminent adepts in chemistry have contrived to raise while a joint of mutton is roasting. We do not allow ourselves to blame it's unusual flatness and insipidity, but extol the little flavour it has, considering the time of it's vegetation.

An extemporaneous poet, therefore, is to be judged as we judge a race-horse; not by the gracefulness of his motion, but the time he takes to finish his course. The best critic upon earth may err in determining his precise degree of merit, if he have neither a stop-watch in his hand, nor a clock within his hearing.

To be a little more serious. An extemporaneous piece ought to be examined by a compound ratio, or a medium compounded of it's real worth, and the shortness of the time that is employed in its production. By this rule, even Virgil's poem may be in some sort deemed extemporaneous; as the time he took

took to perfect so extraordinary a composition, considered with it's real worth, appears shorter than the time employed to write the distichs of Cosconius.

On the other hand, I cannot allow this title to the flashes of my friend S—— in the magazine, which have no sort of claim to be called verses, besides their instantaneity.

Having ever made it my ambition to see my writings distinguished for something poignant, unexpected, or, in some respects, peculiar; I have acquired a degree of fame by a firm adherence to the Concetti. I have stung folks with my epigrams, amused them with acrostics, puzzled them with rebusses, and distracted them with riddles. It remained only for me to succeed in the Impromptu, for which I was utterly disqualified by a whoreson slowness of apprehension.

Still desirous, however, of the immortal honour to grow distinguished for an

extempore, I petitioned Apollo to that purpose in a dream. His answer was as follows: That whatever piece of wit, either written or verbal, makes any pretence to merit, as of extemporaneous production, shall be said or written within the time that the author supports himself on one leg. That Horace had explained his meaning, by the phrase STANS PEDE IN UNO. And forasmuch as one man may persevere in the posture longer than another, he would recommend it to all candidates for this extraordinary accomplishment, that they would habituate themselves to study in no other attitude whatsoever.

Methought I received this answer with the utmost pleasure as well as veneration; hoping that, however I was debarred of the acumen requisite for an extempore, I might learn to weary out my betters in standing on one leg.

ESSAY V.

AN HUMOURIST.

TO form an estimate of the proportion which one man's happiness bears to another's, we are to consider the mind that is allotted him with as much attention as the circumstances. It were superfluous to evince that the same objects which one despises, are frequently to another the substantial source of admiration. The man of business and the man of pleasure are to each other mutually contemptible; and a blue garter has less charms for some, than they can discover in a butterfly. The more candid and sage observer condemns neither for his pursuits, but for the derision he so profusely lavishes upon the disposition of his neighbour. He concludes, that schemes infinitely various were at first intended for our pursuit and pleasure; and that some find their account in heading a cry of hounds, as much as others in the dignity of Lord Chief-Justice.

Having premised thus much, I proceed to give some account of a character which came within the sphere of my own observation.

Not the entrance of a cathedral, not the sound of a passing bell, not the furs of a magistrate, nor the fables of a fu-

neral, were fraught with half the solemnity of face!

Nay, so wonderfully serious was he observed to be on all occasions, that it was found hardly possible to be otherwise in his company. He quashed the loudest tempest of laughter, whenever he entered the room; and men's features, though ever so much roughened, were sure to grow smooth at his approach.

The man had nothing vicious, or even ill-natured in his character; yet he was the dread of all jovial conversation; the young, the gay, found their spirits fly before him. Even the kitten and the puppy, as it were by instinct, would forego their frolics, and be still. The depression he occasioned was like that of a damp, or vitiated air. Unconscious of any apparent cause, you found your spirits sink insensibly: and were any one to fit for the picture of ill-luck, it is not possible the painter could select a more proper person.

Yet he did not fail to boast of a superior share of reason, even for the want of that very faculty, risibility, with which it is supposed to be always joined.

Indeed he acquired the character of the most ingenious person of his country, from

from this meditative temper. Not that he had ever made any great discovery of his talents; but a few oracular declarations, joined with a common opinion that he was writing somewhat for posterity, completed his reputation.

Numbers would have willingly depreciated his character, had not his known sobriety and reputed sense deterred them.

He was one day overheard at his devotions, returning his most sincere thanks for some particularities in his situation, which the generality of mankind would have but little regarded.

'Accept,' said he, 'the gratitude of thy most humble, yet most happy creature, not for silver or gold, the tinsel of mankind, but for those amiable peculiarities which thou hast so graciously interwoven both with my fortune and my complexion: for those treasures so well adapted to that frame of mind thou hast assigned me.

'That the surname which has descended to me is liable to no pun.

'That it runs chiefly upon vowels and liquids.

'That I have a picturesque countenance, rather than one that is esteemed of regular features.

'That there is an intermediate bill, intercepting my view of a nobleman's seat, whose ill obtained superiority I cannot bear to recollect.

'That my estate is over-run with brambles, resounds with cataracts, and is beautifully varied with rocks and precipices, rather than an even cultivated spot, fertile of corn, or wine, or oil; or those kinds of productions in which the sons of men delight themselves.

'That as thou dividest thy bounties impartially, giving riches to one, and the contempt of riches to another; so

'thou hast given me, in the midst of poverty, to despise the insolence of riches, and, by declining all emulation that is founded upon wealth, to maintain the dignity and superiority of the Muses.

'That I have a disposition either so elevated or so ingenious, that I can derive to myself amusements from the very expedients and contrivances with which rigorous necessity furnishes my invention.

'That I can laugh at my own follies, foibles, and infirmities; and that I do not want infirmities to employ this disposition.'

This poor gentleman caught cold one winter's night, as he was contemplating, by the side of a crystal stream, by moonshine. This afterwards terminated in a fever that was fatal to him. Since his death, I have been favoured with the inspection of his poetry, of which I preserved a catalogue for the benefit of my readers.

OCCASIONAL POEMS.

ON his dog, that growing corpulent, refused a crust when it was offered him.

To the memory of a pair of breeches that had done him excellent service.

Having lost his trusty walking-staff, he complaineth.

To his mistress, on her declaring that she loved parsnips better than potatoes.

On an ear-wig that crept into a nectarine, that it might be swallowed by Cloe.

On cutting an artichoke in his garden the day that Queen Anne cut her little finger.

Epigram on a wooden-peg.

Ode to the memory of the great modern—who first invented shoe-buckles.

ESSAY VI.

THE HERMIT.

IN THE MANNER OF CAMBRAY.

TWAS in that delightful month which Love prefers before all others, and which most reveres this deity: that month which ever weaves a verdant carpet for the earth, and embroiders it

with flowers. The banks became inviting through their coverlets of moss; the violets, refreshed by the moisture of descending rains, enriched the tepid air with their agreeable perfumes. But the shower

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Engraved by J. H. B.

Walker sculp.

thunder was past; the sun dispersed the vapours; and the sky was clear and lucid, when Polydore walked forth. He was of a complexion altogether plain and unaffected; a lover of the Muses, and beloved by them. He would oftentimes retire from the noise of mixt conversation, to enjoy the melody of birds, or the murmurs of a water-fall. His neighbours often smiled at his peculiarity of temper; and he no less, at the vulgar cast of theirs. He could never be content to pass his irrevocable time in an idle comment upon a news-paper, or in adjusting the precise difference of temperature betwixt the weather of to-day and yesterday. In short, he was not void of some ambition, but what he felt he acknowledged, and was never averse to vindicate. As he never censured any one who indulged their humour inoffensively, so he claimed no manner of applause for those pursuits which gratified his own. But the sentiments he entertained of honour, and the dignity conferred by royal authority, made it wonderful how he bore the thoughts of obscurity and oblivion. He mentioned, with applause, the youths who by merit had arrived at station; but he thought that all should, in life's visit, leave some token of their existence; and that their friends might more reasonably expect it from them, than they from their posterity.

There were few, he thought, of talents so very inconsiderable, as to be unalterably excluded from all degrees of fame: and, in regard to such as had a liberal education, he ever wished that in some art or science they would be persuaded to engrave their names. He thought it might be some pleasure to reflect, that their names would at least be honoured by their descendants, although they might escape the notice of such as were not prejudiced in their favour.

'What a lustre,' said he, 'does the reputation of a Wren, a Waller, or a Wallingham, cast upon their remotest progeny! and who would not wish rather to be defended from them, than from the mere carcase of nobility?' Yet, wherever superb titles are faithfully offered as the reward of merit, he thought the allurements of ambition were too transporting to be resisted. But to return.

Polydore, a new inhabitant in a sort of wild, uninhabited country, was now

ascended to the top of a mountain, and in the full enjoyment of a very extensive prospect. Before him a broad and winding valley, variegated with all the charms of landscape. Fertile meadows, glittering streams, pendent rocks, and nodding ruins. But these, indeed, were much less the objects of his attention, than those distant hills and spires that were almost concealed by one undistinguished azure. The sea, indeed, appeared to close the scene, though, distant as it was, it but little variegated the view. Hardly, indeed, were it distinguishable, but for the beams of a descending sun, which at the same time warned our traveller to return, before the duskiness and dews of evening had rendered his walk uncomfortable.

He had now descended to the foot of the mountain, when he remarked an old hermit approaching to a little hut, which he had formed with his own hands, at the very bottom of the precipice. Polydore, all enamoured of the beauties he had been surveying, could not avoid wondering at his conduct, who, not content with shunning all commerce with mankind, had contrived as much as possible to exclude all views of nature. He accosted him in the manner following—'Father,' says he, 'it is with no small surprise, that I observe your choice of situation, by which you seem to neglect the most distant and delightful landscape that ever my eyes beheld. The hills, beneath which you have contrived to hide your habitation, would have afforded you such a variety of natural curiosities, as, to a person so contemplative, must appear highly entertaining; and as the cell to which you are advancing is seemingly of your own contrivance, methinks 'twas probable you would so have placed it, as to present them, in all their beauty, to your eye.'

The hermit made him this answer—'My son,' says he, 'the evening approaches, and you have deviated from your way. I would not therefore detain you by my story, did not I imagine the moon would prove a safer guide to you, than that setting sun, which you must otherwise rely upon. Enter, therefore, for a while into my cave, and I will give you then some account of my adventures, which will solve your doubts, perhaps, more effectually, than any method I can propose,

pose. But before you enter my lone abode, calculated only for the use of meditation, dare to condemn superfluous magnificence, and render thyself worthy of the Being I contemplate.

Know, then, that I owe what the world is pleased to call my ruin (and indeed justly, were it not for the use which I have made of it) to an assured dependence, in a literal sense, upon confused and distant prospects: a consideration, which hath indeed so affected me, that I shall never henceforth enjoy a landscape that lies at so remote a distance, as not to exhibit all its parts. And, indeed, were I to form the least pretensions to what your world calls taste, I might even then perhaps contend that a well discriminated landscape was at all times to be preferred to a distant and promiscuous azure.

I was born in the parish of a nobleman who arrived to the principal management of the business of the nation. The heir of his family and myself were of the same age, and, for some time, school-fellows. I had made considerable advances in his esteem; and the mutual affection we entertained for each other, did not long remain unobserved by his family or my own. He was sent early upon his travels, pursuant to a very injudicious custom, and my parents were solicited to consent that I might accompany him. Intimations were given to my friends, that a person of such importance as his father might contribute much more to my immediate promotion, than the utmost diligence I could use in pursuit of it. My father, I remember, assented with reluctance: my mother, fired with the ambition of her son's future greatness, through much importunity "wrung from him his slow leave." I, for my own part, wanted no great persuasion. We made what is called the great tour of Europe. We neither of us, I believe, could be said to want natural sense; but being banished so early in life, were more attentive to every deviation from our own indifferent customs, than to any useful examination of their policies or manners. Judgment, for the most part, ripens very slowly. Fantasy often expands her blossoms all at once.

We were now returning home from a six year's absence; anticipating the caresses of our parents and relations,

when my ever-honoured companion was attacked by a fever. All possible means of safety proving finally ineffectual, he expired in one of his lucid intervals as follows.

"Alas! my Clytander, my life, they tell me, is of very short continuance. The next paroxysm of my fever will probably be conclusive.

"The prospect of this sudden change does not allow me to speak the gratitude I owe thee; much less to reward the kindness on which it is so justly grounded. Thou knowest I was sent away early from my parents, and the more rational part of my life has been passed with thee alone. It cannot be but they will prove solicitous in their enquiries concerning me. Thy narrative will awake their tendernefs, and they cannot but conceive some for their son's companion and his friend. What I would hope is, that they will render thee some services, in place of those their beloved son intended thee, and which I can unfeignedly assert, would have been only bounded by my power. My dear companion, farewell! All other temporal enjoyments have I banished from my heart: but friendship lingers long, and 'tis with tears I say, Farewell!"

My concern was truly so great, that, upon my arrival in my native country, it was not at all increased by the consideration that the nobleman, on whom my hopes depended, was removed from all his places. I waited on him; and he appeared sensibly grieved that the friendship he had ever professed could now so little avail me. He recommended me, however, to a friend of his that was then of the successful party, and who, he was assured, would, at his request, assist me to the utmost of his power. I was now in the prime of life, which I effectually consumed upon the empty forms of court-attendance. Hopes arose before me like bubbles upon a stream; as quick succeeding one another, as superficial and as vain. Thus busied in my pursuit, and rejecting the assistance of cool examination, I found the winter of life approaching, and nothing procured to shelter or protect me when my second patron died. A race of new ones appeared before me, and even yet kept my expectations in play. I wished indeed I had retreated sooner; but

but to retire at last unrecompensed, and when a few months attendance might happen to prove successful, was beyond all power of resolution.

However, after a few years more attendance, distributed in equal proportions upon each of these new patrons, I at length obtained a place of much trouble and small emolument. On the acceptance of this, my eyes seemed open all at once. I had no passion remaining for the splendor which was grown familiar to me, and for servility and confinement I entertained an utter aversion. I officiated however for a few weeks in my post, wondering still more and more how I could ever covet the life I led. I was ever most sincere, but sincerity clashed with my situation every moment of the day. In short, I returned home to a paternal income, not indeed intending that austere life in which you at present find me engaged. I thought to content myself with common necessities, and to give the rest, if aught remained, to charity; determined, however, to avoid all appearance of singularity. But, alas! to my great surprize, the person who supplied my expences had so far embroiled my little affairs, that, when my debts, &c. were discharged, I was unable to sub-

sist in any better manner than I do at present. I grew at first entirely melancholy; left the country where I was born, and raised the humble roof that covers me in a country where I am not known. I now begin to think myself happy in my present way of life: I cultivate a few vegetables to support me; and the little well there, is a very clear one. I am now an useless individual; little able to benefit mankind; but a prey to shame, and to confusion, on the first glance of every eye that knows me. My spirits are indeed something raised by a clear sky, or a meridian sun; but as to extensive views of the country, I think them well enough exchanged for the warmth and comfort which this vale affords me. Ease is at least the proper ambition of age, and it is confessedly my supreme one.

Yet will I not permit you to depart from an hermit, without one instructive lesson. Whatever situation in life you ever wish or propose for yourself, acquire a clear and lucid idea of the inconveniencies attending it. I utterly contemned and rejected, after a month's experience, the very post I had all my life-time been solicitous to procure.

ESSAY VII.

ON DISTINCTIONS, ORDERS, AND DIGNITIES.

THE subject turned upon the nature of societies, ranks, orders, and distinctions, amongst men.

A gentleman of spirit, and of the popular faction, had been long declaiming against any kind of honours that tended to elevate a body of people into a distinct species from the rest of the nation. Particularly titles and blue ribbands were the object of his indignation. They were, as he pretended, too invidious an ostentation of superiority, to be allowed in any nation that stiled itself free. Much was said upon the subject of appearances, so far as they were countenanced by law or custom. The bishop's lawn; the marshal's truncheon; the baron's robe; and the judge's peruke; were considered only as necessary substitutes, where genuine purity, real cou-

rage, native dignity, and suitable penetration, were wanting to compleat the characters of those to whom they were assigned.

It was urged that policy had often effectually made it a point to dazzle in order to enslave; and instances were brought of groundless distinctions borne about in the glare of day by certain persons, who, being stripped of them, would be less esteemed than the meanest plebeian.

He acknowledged, indeed, that kings, the fountains of all political honour, had hitherto shewn no complaisance to that sex whose softer dispositions rendered them more excusably fond of such peculiarities.

That, in favour of the ladies, he should esteem himself sufficiently happy

in the honour of inventing one order, which should be styled The most powerful order of beauties.

That their number in Great Britain should be limited to five thousand; the dignity for ever to be conferred by the queen alone, who should be styled sovereign of the order, and the rest the companions.

That the instalment should be rendered a thousand times more ceremonious, the dresses more superb, and the plumes more enormous, than those already in use amongst the companions of the garter.

That the distinguishing badge of this order should be an artificial nosegay, to be worn on the left breast; consisting of a lilly and a rose, the proper emblems of complexion, and intermixed with a branch of myrtle, the tree sacred to Venus.

That instead of their shields being fixed to the stalls appointed for this order, there should be a gallery erected to receive their pictures at full length. Their portraits to be taken by four painters of the greatest eminence; and he whose painting was preferred, to be styled A knight of the rose and lilly.

That when any person addressed a letter to a lady of this order, the style should always be To the Right Beautiful Miss or Lady Such-a-one.

He seemed for some time undetermined whether they should forfeit their title upon marriage; but at length, for

many reasons, proposed it should be continued to them.

And thus far the gentleman proceeded in his harrangue; when it was objected that the queen, unless she unaccountably chose to mark out game for her husband, could take no sort of pleasure in conferring this honour where it was most due: that as ladies grew in years, this epithet of Beautiful would burlesque them; and, in short, considering the frailty of beauty, there was no lasting compliment that could be bestowed upon it.

At this the orator smiled, and acknowledged it was true: but asked at the same time, why it was more absurd to style a lady right beautiful, in the days of her deformity, than to term a peer right honourable when he grew a scandal to mankind?

That this was sometimes the case, he said, was not to be disputed; because titles have been sometimes granted to a worthless son, in consequence of a father's enormous wealth most unjustly acquired. And few had ever surpassed in villainy the right honourable the Earl of A—.

The company was a little surprised at the sophistry of our declaimant. However, it was replied to, by a person present, that Lord —'s title being fictitious, no one ought to instance him to the disadvantage of the Peerage, who had, strictly speaking, never been of that number.

ESSAY VIII.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT,

THE declaimant I before mentioned, continued his harrangue. 'There are (said he) certain epithets which so frequently occur, that they are the less considered; and which are seldom or never examined, on account of the many opportunities of examination that present themselves.

'Of this kind is the word Gentleman. This word, on it's first introduction, was given, I suppose, to freemen, in op-

position to vassals; these being the two classes into which the nation was once divided*. The freeman was he, who was possessed of land, and could therefore subsist without manual labour; the vassal, he who tenanted the land, and was obliged to his thane for the necessities of life. The different manners, we may presume, that sprung from their different situations and connections, occasioned the one to be denominated a ci-

* As the author is not writing a treatise on the feudal law, but a moral essay, any little inaccuracies it is to be hoped will be over-looked by those, who, from several late treatises on this subject might expect great exactness and precision in a serious discussion of this point.

vilized or gentle personage; and the other to obtain the name of a mere rustic or villain.

‘But upon the publication of crusades, the state of things was considerably altered: it was then that every freeman distinguished the shield which he wore with some painted emblem or device; and this, in order that his fellow-combatants might attribute to him his proper applause; which, upon account of similar accoutrements, might be otherwise subject to misapplication.

‘Upon this there arose a distinction betwixt freeman and freeman. All who had served in those religious wars continued the use of their first devices, but all devices were not illustrated by the same pretensions to military glory.

‘However, these campaigns were discontinued: fresh families sprung up; who, without any pretence to mark themselves with such devices as these holy combatants, were yet as desirous of respect, of estimation, of distinction. It would be tedious enough to trace the steps by which money establishes even absurdity. A court of heraldry sprung up to supply the place of crusade exploits, to grant imaginary shields and trophies to families that never wore real armour, and it is but of late that it has been discovered to have no real jurisdiction.

‘Yet custom is not at once overthrown; and he is even now deemed a gentleman who has arms recorded in the Herald’s Office, and at the same time follows none except a liberal employment.

‘Allowing this distinction, it is obvious to all who consider, that a churlish, morose, illiterate clown; a lazy, beggarly, sharpening vagabond; a stupid, lubberly, inactive sot, or pick-pocket, nay even an highwayman, may be nevertheless a gentleman as by law established. In short, that the definition may, together with others, include also the filth, the scum, and the dregs of the creation.

‘But do we not appear to disallow this account, when we say, “such or such an action was not done in a gentleman-like manner—such usage was not the behaviour of a gentleman,” and so forth? We seem thus to insinuate that the appellation of Gentleman regards morals as well as family; and that

integrity, politeness, generosity, and affability, have the truest claim to a distinction of this kind. Whence then shall we suppose was derived this contradiction? Shall we say that the plebeians, having the virtues on their side, by degrees removed this appellation from the basis of family to that of merit; which they esteemed, and not unjustly, to be the true and proper pedestal? This the gentry would scarce allow. Shall we then insist that every thing great and god-like was heretofore the achievement of the gentry? But this, perhaps, will not obtain the approbation of the commoners.

‘To reconcile the difference, let us suppose the denomination may belong equally to two sorts of men. The one, what may be styled a gentleman, *de jure*, viz. a man of generosity, politeness, learning, taste, genius, or affability; in short, accomplished in all that is splendid, or endeared to us by all that is amiable, on the one side: and on the other, a gentleman, *de facto*, or what, to English readers, I would term a gentleman as by law established.

‘As to the latter appellation, what is really essential, or, as logicians would say, “*quarto modo proprium*,” is a real, or at least specious, claim to the inheritance of certain coat-armour from a second or more distant ancestor; and this unstained by any mechanical or illiberal employment.

‘We may discover, on this state of the case, that, however material a difference this distinction supposes, yet it is not wholly impracticable for a gentleman *de jure* to render himself in some sort a gentleman *de facto*. A certain sum of money, deposited in the hands of my good friends Norroy or Rogue-dragon, will convey to him a coat of arms descending from as many ancestors as he pleases. On the other hand, the gentleman *de facto* may become a gentleman *alio de jure*, by the acquisition of certain virtues, which are rarely all of them unattainable. The latter, I must acknowledge, is the more difficult task; at least we may daily discover crowds acquire sufficient wealth to buy gentility, but very few that possess the virtues which ennoble human nature, and (in the best sense of the word) constitute a GENTLEMAN.’

ESSAY IX.

A CHARACTER.

—HE was a youth so amply furnished with every excellence of mind, that he seemed alike capable of acquiring or disregarding the goods of fortune. He had indeed all the learning and erudition that can be derived from universities, without the pedantry and ill manners which are too often their attendants. What few or none acquire by the most intense assiduity, he possessed by nature: I mean, that elegance of taste, which disposed him to admire beauty under its great variety of appearances. It passed not unobserved by him either in the cut of a sieve, or the integrity of a moral action. The proportion of a statue, the convenience of an edifice, the movement in a dance, and the complexion of a cheek or flower, afforded him sensations of beauty; that beauty with inferior geniuses are taught coldly to distinguish, or to discern rather than feel. He could trace the excellencies both of the courtier and the student, who are mutually ridiculous in the eyes of each other. He had nothing in his character that could obscure so great accomplishments, beside the want, the total want, of a desire to exhibit them. Through this it came to pass, that what would have raised another to the heights of reputation, was oftentimes in him passed over unregarded. For, in respect to ordinary observers, it is requisite to lay some stress yourself, on what you intend should be remarked by others; and this never was his way. His knowledge of books had in some degree diminished his knowledge of the world; or,

rather, the external forms and manners of it. His ordinary conversation was, perhaps, rather too pregnant with sentiment, the usual fault of rigid students; and this he would in some degree have regulated better, did not the universality of his genius, together with the method of his education, so largely contribute to this amiable defect. This kind of awkwardness (since his modesty will allow it no better name) may be compared to the stiffness of a fine piece of brocade, whose turgescency indeed constitutes, and is inseparable from, its value. He gave delight by an happy boldness in the extirpation of common prejudices; which he could as readily penetrate, as he could humourously ridicule: and he had such entire possession of the hearts as well as understandings of his friends, that he could soon make the most surprising paradoxes believed and well accepted. His image, like that of a sovereign, could give an additional value to the most precious ore; and we no sooner believed our eyes that it was he who spake it, than we as readily believed whatever he had to say. In this he differed from W—r, that he had the talent of rendered the greatest virtues unenvied: whereas the later shone more remarkably in making his very faults agreeable, I mean in regard to those few he had to exercise his skill.

N. B. This was written, in an extempore manner, on my friend's wall at Oxford, with a black lead pencil, 1735, and intended for his character.

ESSAY X.

ON RESERVE.

A FRAGMENT.

TAKING an evening's walk with a friend in the country, among many grave remarks, he was making the following observation. There is not, says, he, 'any one quality so inconsistent with respect, as what is commonly

' called familiarity. You do not find
' one in fifty, whose regard is proof
' against it. At the same time, it is
' hardly possible to insist upon such a
' deference as will render you ridiculous, if it be supported by common
' sense.

‘ sense. Thus much at least is evident, that your demands will be so successful, as to procure a greater share than if you had made no such demand. I may frankly own to you, Leander, that I frequently derived uneasiness, from a familiarity with such persons as despised every thing they could obtain with ease. Were it not better, therefore, to be somewhat frugal of our ability, at least to allot it only to the few persons of discernment who can make the proper distinction betwixt real dignity and pretended: to neglect those characters, which, being impatient to grow familiar, are at the same time very far from familiarity-proof; to have posthumous fame in view, which affords us the most pleasing landskip: to enjoy the amusement of reading, and the consciousness that reading paves the way to general esteem; to preserve a constant regularity of temper, and also of constitution, for the most part but little consistent with a promiscuous intercourse with men: to shun all illiterate, though ever so joyful assemblies, insipid, perhaps, when present, and upon reflection painful: to meditate on those absent or departed friends, who value or valued us for those qualities with which they were best acquainted: to partake with such a friend as you, the delights of a studious and rational retirement—Are not these the paths that lead to happiness?’

In answer to this (for he seemed to feel some late mortification) I observed, that what we lost by familiarity in respect, was generally made up to us by the affection it procured; and that an absolute solitude was so very contrary to our natures, that were he excluded from society but for a single fortnight, he would be exhilarated at the sight of the first beggar that he saw.

What follows were thoughts thrown out in our further discourse upon the subject; without order or connection, as they occur to my remembrance.

Some reserve is a debt to prudence; as freedom and simplicity of conversation is a debt to good-nature.

There would not be any absolute necessity for reserve, if the world were honest: yet, even then, it would prove expedient. For, in order to attain any de-

gree of deference, it seems necessary that people should imagine you have more accomplishments than you discover.

It is on this depends one of the excellencies of the judicious Virgil. He leaves you something ever to imagine: and such is the constitution of the human mind, that we think so highly of nothing, as of that whereof we do not see the bounds. ‘This, as Mr. Burke ingeniously observes, affords the pleasure when we survey a Cylinder*’; and Sir John Suckling says—

‘ They who know all the wealth they have,
are poor;
‘ He’s only rich who cannot tell his store.’

A person that would secure to himself great deference, will, perhaps, gain his point by silence, as effectually as by any thing he can say.

To be, however, a niggard of one’s observations, is so much worse than to hoard up one’s money, as the former may be both imparted and retained at the same time.

Men oftentimes pretend to proportion their respect to real desert; but a supercilious reserve and distance wearies them into a compliance with more. This appears so very manifest to many persons of the lofty character, that they use no better means to acquire respect than like highwaymen to make a demand of it. They will, like Empedocles, jump into the fire, rather than betray the mortal part of their character.

It is from the same principle of distance that nations are brought to believe that their great duke knoweth all things; as is the case in some countries.

‘ Men, while no human form or fault they see,
Excuse the want of ev’n humanity:
And eastern kings, who vulgar view disdain,
Require no worth to fix their awful reign.
You cannot say in truth what may disgrace ’em:

You know in what predicament to place ’em.
Alas! in all the glare of light reveal’d,
Ev’n virtue charms us less than vice conceal’d!’

‘ For some small worth he had, the man was priz’d,
He added frankness—and he grew despo’d.’

We want comets, not ordinary planets:
Tædet quotidianarum barum formarum.

TERENCE.

*Hunc cælum, & stellæ, & decedentia certis
Tempora momentis, sunt qui formidine nullâ
Imbuti spectant.*

Virtues, like essences, lose their fragrance when exposed. They are sensitive plants, which will not bear too familiar approaches.

Let us be careful to distinguish modesty, which is ever amiable, from reserve, which is only prudent. A man is hated sometimes for pride, when it was an excess of humility gave the occasion.

What is often termed shyness, is nothing more than refined sense, and an indifference to common observations.

The reserved man's intimate acquaintance are, for the most part, fonder of him, than the persons of a more affable character; i. e. he pays them a greater compliment than the other can do him, as he distinguishes them more.

It is indolence, and the pain of being upon one's guard, that makes one hate an artful character.

The most reserved of men, that will not exchange two syllables together in an English coffee-house, should they meet at Ispahan, would drink therbet, and eat a mess of rice together.

The man of shew is vain: the reserved man is proud more properly. The one has greater depth; the other a more lively imagination. The one is more frequently respected; the other more generally beloved. The one a Cato: the other a Cæsar. Vide Sallust.

What Cæsar said of 'Rubicundos amans; pallidos timeo;' may be applied to familiarity, and to reserve.

A reserved man often makes it a rule to leave company with a good speech; and I believe sometimes proceeds so far as to leave company, because he has made one. Yet it is his fate often, like

the mole, to imagine himself deep, when he is near the surface.

Were it prudent to decline this reserve, and this horror of disclosing foibles; to give up a part of a character to secure the rest? The world will certainly insist upon having some part to pull to pieces. Let us throw out some follies to the envious; as we give up counters to an highwayman, or a barrel to a whale, in order to save one's money and one's ship: to let it make exceptions to one's head of hair, if one can escape being stabbed in the heart.

The reserved man should drink double glasses.

Prudent men lock up their motives; letting familiars have a key to their heart, as to their garden.

A reserved man is in continual conflict with the social part of his nature; and even grudges himself the laugh into which he sometimes is betrayed.

* Seldom he smiles—

* And smiles in such a sort as he disdained

* Himself—that could be moved to smile at any thing.

* A fool and his words are soon parted; for so should the proverb run.

Common understandings, like cits in gardening, allow no shades to their picture.

Modesty often passes for arrant haughtiness; as what is deemed spirit in an horse proceeds from fear.

The higher character a person supports, the more he should regard his minutest actions.

The reserved man should bring a certificate of his honesty, before he be admitted into company.

* Reserve is no more essentially connected with understanding, than a church-organ with devotion, or wine with good-nature*.

ESSAY XI.

ON EXTERNAL FIGURE.

THERE is a young gentleman in my parish, who, on account of his superior equipage, is esteemed universally more proud and more haughty than his

neighbours. 'Tis frequently hinted, that he is by no means intitled to so splendid an appearance, either by his birth, his station, or his fortune; and

* These were no other than a collection of hints, when I proposed to write a poetical essay on Reserve.

that it is, of consequence, mere pride that urges him to live beyond his rank, or renders him blind to the knowledge of it. With all this fondness for external splendor, he is a most affable and ingenious man; and for this reason I am inclined to vindicate him, when these things are mentioned to his disadvantage.

In the first place, it is by no means clear, that dress and equipage are sure signs of pride. Where it is joined with a supercilious behaviour, it becomes then a corroborative testimony. But this is not always the case: the refinements of luxury in equipage, or a table, are perhaps as often the gratifications of fancy, as the consequence of an ambition to surpass and eclipse our equals. Whoever thinks that taste has nothing to do here, must confine the expression to improper limits; assuredly imagination may find its account in them, wholly independent of worldly homage and considerations more invidious.

In the warmth of friendship for this gentleman, I am sometimes prompted to go further. I insist, it is not birth or fortune only that give a person claim to a splendid appearance; that it may be conferred by other qualifications, in which my friend is acknowledged to have a share.

I have sometimes urged that remarkable ingenuity, any great degree of merit in learning, arts or sciences, are a more reasonable authority for a splendid appearance than those which are commonly presumed to be so. That there is something more personal in this kind of advantages than in rank or fortune, will not be denied: and surely there ought to be some proportion observed betwixt the case and the thing enclosed. The propensity of rich and worthless people to appear with a splendour upon all occasions, puts one in mind of the country shopkeeper, who gilds his boxes in order to be the receptacle of pitch or tobacco. It is not unlike the management at our theatres royal, where you see a piece of candle honoured with a crown.

I have generally considered those as privileged people, who are able to support the character they assume. Those who are incapable of shining but by dress, would do well to consider that the contrast betwixt them and their cloaths turns out much to their disadvantage. It is on this account I have sometimes observed with pleasure some

noblemen of immense fortune to dress exceedingly plain.

If dress be only allowable to persons of family, it may then be considered as a sort of family livery, and Jack the groom may, with equal justice, pride himself upon the gaudy wardrobe his master gives him. Nay more—For a gentleman, before he hires a servant, will require some testimony of his merit, whereas the master challenges his own right to splendour, though possessed of no merit at all.

Upon my present scheme of dress, it may seem to answer some very good purposes. It is then established on the same foundation as the judge's robe and the prelate's lawn. If dress were only authorized in men of ingenuity, we should find many aiming at the previous merit, in hopes of the subsequent distinction. The finery of an empty fellow would render him as ridiculous as a star and garter would one never knighted: and men would use as commendable a diligence to qualify themselves for a brocaded waistcoat, or a gold snuff-box, as they now do to procure themselves a right of investing their limbs in lawn or ermine. We should not esteem a man a coxcomb for his dress, till, by frequent conversation, we discovered a flaw in his title. If he was incapable of uttering a bon mot, the gold upon his coat would seem foreign to his circumstances. A man should not wear a French dress, till he could give an account of the best French authors: and he should be versed in all the Oriental languages before he should presume to wear a diamond.

It may be urged, that men of the greatest merit may not be able to shew it in their dress, on account of their slender income. But here it should be considered that another part of the world would find their equipage so much reduced by a sumptuary law of this nature, that a very moderate degree of splendour would distinguish them more than a greater does at present.

What I propose, however, upon the whole, is, that men of merit should be allowed to dress in proportion to it; but this with the privilege of appearing plain, whenever they found an expediency in so doing: as a nobleman lays aside his garter, when he sees no valuable consequence in the discovery of his quality.

ESSAY XII.

A CHARACTER.

ANIMÆ NIL MAGNÆ LAUDIS EGENTES.*

THERE is an order of persons in the world, whose thoughts never deviate from the common road; whatever events occur, whatever objects present themselves, their observations are as uniform, as though they were the consequence of instinct. There is nothing places these men in a more insignificant point of light, than a comparison of their ideas with the refinements of some great genius. I shall only add, by way of reflection, that it is people of this stamp, who, together with the soundest health, often enjoy the greatest equanimity: their passions, like dull steeds, being the least apt to endanger or misguide them: yet such is the fatality! Men of genius are often expected to act with most discretion, on account of that very fancy which is their greatest impediment.

I was taking a view of Westminster Abbey, with an old gentleman of exceeding honesty, but the same degree of understanding as that I have described.

There had nothing passed in our way thither, beside the customary salutations, and an endeavour to decide with accuracy upon the present temperature of the weather. On passing over the threshold, he observed with an air of thoughtfulness, that it was a brave ancient place.

I told him, I thought there was none more suitable, to moralize upon the futility of all earthly glory, as there was none which contained the ashes of men that had acquired a greater share of it. On this he gave a nod of approbation, but did not seem to comprehend me.

Silence ensued for many minutes; when having had time to reflect upon the monuments of men famous in their generations, he stood collected in himself; assuring me, 'There was no sort of excellence could exempt a man from death.'

I applauded the justice of his observation; and said, it was not only my

present opinion, but had been so for a number of years. 'Right,' says he, 'and for my own part I seldom love to publish my remarks upon a subject, till I have had them confirmed to me by a long course of experience.'

This last maxim, somewhat beyond his usual depth, occasioned a silence of some few minutes. The spring had been too much bent to recover immediately its wonted vigour. We had taken some few turns up and down the left-hand aisle, when he caught sight of a monument somewhat larger than the rest, and more calculated to make impression upon an ordinary imagination. As I remember, it was raised to an ancestor of the D. of Newcastle. 'Well,' says he, with an air of cunning, 'this is indeed a fine piece of workmanship; but I cannot conceive this finery is of any signification to the person buried there.' I told him, I thought not; and that, under a notion of respect to the deceased, people were frequently imposed upon by their own pride and affectation.

We were now arrived at the monument of Sir George Chamberlain; where my friend had just perused enough to inform him that he was an eminent physician, when he broke out with precipitation, and as though some important discovery had struck his fancy on a sudden. I listened to him with attention, till I found him labouring to insinuate that physicians themselves could not save their lives when their time was come.

He had not proceeded many steps from it before he beckoned to our Ciceroni. 'Friend,' says he, pointing with his cane, 'how long has that gentleman been dead?' The man set him right in that particular; after which putting on a woeful countenance—'Well,' says he, 'to behold how fast time flies away! 'Tis but a small time to look back upon, since he and I met at the Devil*. Alas!' continued he, 'we

* A well-known tavern near Temple Bar.

* shall

'shall never do so again.' Indulging myself with a pun that escaped me on a sudden, I told him I hoped not; and immediately took my leave.

This old gentleman, as I have since heard, passed his life chiefly in the country; where it faintly participated either of pleasure or of pain. His chief delights indeed were senial, but those of the less vigorous kind; an afternoon's pipe, an evening walk, or a nap after dinner. His death, which happened, it seems, quickly after, was occasioned by an uniform application to Bosstock's cordial, whatever his case required. Indeed his discourse, when any complaint of sickness, was a little exuberant in the praises of this noble cathartic. But

his distemper proving of a nature to which this remedy was wholly foreign, as well as this precluding the use of a more effectual recipe, he expired, not without the character of a most considerate person. I find, by one part of his will, he obliged his heir to consume a certain quantity of ale among his neighbours, on the day he was born; and by another, left a ring of bells to the church adjoining to his garden. It looks as if the old gentleman had not only an aversion to much reflection in himself, but endeavoured to provide against it in succeeding generations.

I have heard that he sometimes boasted that he was a distant relation of Sir Roger de Coverly.

ESSAY XIII.

AN OPINION OF GHOSTS.

IT is remarkable how much the belief of ghosts and apparitions of persons departed has lost ground within these fifty years. This may perhaps be explained by the general growth of knowledge; and by the consequent decay of superstition, even in those kingdoms where it is most essentially interwoven with religion.

The same credulity, which disposed the mind to believe the miracles of a popish saint, set aside at once the interposition of reason; and produced a fondness for the marvellous, which it was the priest's advantage to promote.

It may be natural enough to suppose that a belief of this kind might spread in the days of popish insatiation. A belief, as much supported by ignorance, as the ghosts themselves were indebted to the night.

But whence comes it, that narratives of this kind have at any time been given, by persons of veracity, of judgment, and of learning? Men neither liable to be deceived themselves, nor to be suspected of an inclination to deceive others, though it were their interest; nor who could be supposed to have any interest in it, even though it were their inclination.

Here seems a further explanation wanting than what can be drawn from superstition.

I go upon a supposition, that the relations themselves were false. For as

to the arguments sometimes used in this case, that had there been no true shilling there had been no counterfeit, it seems wholly a piece of sophistry. The true shilling here should mean the living person; and the counterfeit resemblance, the posthumous figure of him, that either strikes our senses or our imagination.

Supposing no ghost then ever appeared, is it a consequence that no man could ever imagine that they saw the figure of a person deceased? Surely those, who say this, little know the force, the caprice, or the defects, of the imagination.

Persons after a debauch of liquor, or under the influence of terror, or in the deliria of a fever, or in a fit of lunacy, or even walking in their sleep, have had their brain as deeply impressed with chimerical representations, as they could possibly have been, had these representations struck their senses.

I have mentioned but a few instances, wherein the brain is primarily affected. Others may be given, perhaps not quite so common, where the stronger passions, either acute or chronic, have impressed their object upon the brain; and this in so lively a manner, as to leave the visionary no room to doubt of their real presence.

How difficult then must it be to deceive a person as to objects thus imprinted? Imprinted absolutely with the same force as their eyes themselves could

have portrayed them! And how many persons must there needs be, who could never be undeceived at all!

Some of these causes might not improbably have given rise to the notion of apparitions: and when the notion had been once promulgated, it had a natural tendency to produce more instances.

The gloom of night, that was productive of terror, would be naturally productive of apparitions. The event confirmed it.

The passion of grief for a departed friend, of horror for a murdered enemy, of remorse for a wronged testator, of love for a mistress killed by inconsistency, of gratitude to a wife for long fidelity, of desire to be reconciled to one who died at variance, of impatience to vindicate what was falsely construed, of propensity to consult with an adviser that is lost—The more faint as well as the more powerful passions, when bearing relation to a person deceased, have often, I fancy, with concurrent circumstances, been sufficient to exhibit the dead to the living.

But what is more, there seems no other account that is adequate to the case as I have stated it. Allow this, and you have at once a reason, why the most upright may have published a falsehood, and the most judicious confirmed an absurdity.

Supposing then that apparitions of this kind may have some real use in God's moral government: is not any moral purpose, for which they may be employed, as effectually answered on my supposition, as the other? for surely it cannot be of any importance, by what means the brain receives these images. The effect, the conviction, and the resolution consequent, may be just the same in either of the cases.

Such appears to me at least, to be the true existence of apparitions.

The reasons against any external apparition, among others that may be brought, are these that follow.

They are, I think, never seen by day; and darkness being the season of terror and uncertainty, and the imagination left restrained, they are never visible to more than one person: which had more probably been the case, were not the vision internal.

They have not been reported to have appeared these twenty years. What cause can be assigned, were their existence real, for so great a change as their discontinuance?

The cause of superstition has lost ground for this last century; the notion of ghosts has been, together, exploded: a reason why the imagination should be less prone to conceive them; but not a reason why they themselves should cease,

Most of those, who relate that these spectres have appeared to them, have been persons either deeply superstitious in other respects; of enthusiastic imaginations, or strong passions, which are the consequence; or else have allowedly felt some perturbation at the time.

Some few instances may be supposed, where the caprice of imagination, so very remarkable in dreams, may have presented fantasms to those that waked. I believe there are few but can recollect some, wherein it has wrought mistakes, at least equal to that of a white horse for a winding sheet.

To conclude. As my hypothesis supposes the chimera to give terror equal to the reality, our best means of avoiding it, is to keep a strict guard over our passions; to avoid intemperance, as we would a charnel-house; and by making frequent appeals to cool reason and common sense, secure to ourselves the property of a well-regulated imagination.

ESSAY XIV.

ON CARDS.

A FRAGMENT.

******W**E had passed our evening with some certain persons famous for their taste, their learning, and refinement: but, as ill-luck would have it, two fellows, duller

than the rest, had contrived to put themselves upon a level, by introducing a GAME AT CARDS,

'Tis a sign,' said he, 'the world is far gone in absurdity, or surely the fashion

'fashion of cards would be accounted no small one. Is it not surprizing that men of sense should submit to join in this idle custom, which appears originally invented to supply its deficiency? But such is the fatality! imperfections give rise to fashions; and are followed by those who do not labour under the defects that introduced them. Nor is the hoop the only instance of a fashion invented by those who found their account in it; and afterwards countenanced by others to whose figure it was prejudicial.

'How can men, who value themselves upon their reflections, give encouragement to a practice, which puts an end to thinking?'

I intimated the old allusion of the bow, that requires fresh vigour by a temporary relaxation.

He answered, this might be applicable, provided I could show, that cards did not require the pain of thinking; and merely exclude from it the profit and the pleasure.

'Cards, if one may guess from their first appearance, seem invented for the use of children; and, among the toys peculiar to infancy, the bells, the whistle, the rattle, and the hobby-horse, deserved their share of commendation. By degrees men, who came nearest to children in understanding and want of ideas, grew enamoured of the use of them as a suitable entertainment. Others also, pleased to reflect on the innocent part of their lives, had recourse to this amuse-

ment, as what recalled it to their minds. A knot of villains encreased the party; who, regardless of that entertainment which the former seemed to draw from cards, considered them in a more serious light, and made use of them as a more decent substitute to robbing on the road, or picking pockets. But men who propose to themselves a dignity of character, where will you find their inducement to this kind of game? For difficult indeed were it to determine, whether it appear more odious among sharpers, or more empty and ridiculous among persons of character.'

'Perhaps,' replied I, 'your men of wit and fancy may favour this diversion, as giving occasion for the crop of jest and witticism, which naturally enough arises from the names and circumstances of the cards.'

He said, he would allow this as a proper motive, in case the men of wit and humour would accept the excuse themselves.

'In short,' says he, 'as persons of ability are capable of furnishing out a much more agreeable entertainment; when a gentleman offers me cards, I shall esteem it as his private opinion that I have neither sense nor fancy.'

I asked how much he had lost—His answer was, he did not much regard ten pieces; but that it hurt him to have squandered them away on cards; and that to the loss of a conversation, for which he would have given twenty.

ESSAY XV.

ON HYPOCRISY.

WERE hypocrites to pretend to no uncommon sanctity, their want of merit would be less discoverable. But pretensions of this nature bring their characters upon the carpet. Those who endeavour to pass for the lights of the world must expect to attract the eyes of it. A small blemish is more easily discoverable in them, and more justly ridiculous, than a much greater in their neighbours. A small blemish also presents a clue, which very often conducts us through the most in-

tricate mazes and dark recesses of their character.

Notwithstanding the evidence of this, how often do we see pretence cultivated in proportion as virtue is neglected! As religion sinks in one scale, pretence is exalted in the other.

Perhaps their is not a more effectual key to the discovery of hypocrisy than a censorious temper. The man possessed of real virtue knows the difficulty of attaining it; and is, of course, more inclined to pity others, who happen to fail in

in the pursuit. The hypocrite, on the other hand, having never trod the thorny path, is less induced to pity those who desert it for the flowery one. He exposes the unhappy victim without compunction, and even with a kind of triumph; not considering that vice is the proper object of compassion; or that propensity to censure is almost a worse quality than any it can expose.

Clelia was born in England, of Roman parents, about the time of the Revolution. She seemed naturally framed for love, if you were to judge by her external beauties; but if you build your opinion on her outward conduct, you would have deemed her as naturally averse to it. Numerous were the garçons of the polite and gallant nation, who endeavoured to overcome her prejudices, and to reconcile her manners to her form. Persons of rank, fortune, learning, wit, youth, and beauty, sued to her; nor had she any reason to quarrel with Love for the shapes in which he appeared before her. Yet in vain were all applications. Religion was her only object; and she seemed resolved to pass her days in all the austerities of the most rigid convent. To this purpose she sought out an abbess that presided over a nunnery in Languedoc, a small community, particularly remarkable for extraordinary instances of self-denial. The abbess herself exhibited a person in which chastity appeared indeed not very meritorious. Her character was perfectly well known before she went to preside over this little society. Her virtues were indeed such as she thought most convenient to her circumstances. Her fasts were the effect of avarice, and her devotions of the spleen. She considered the cheapness of house-keeping as the great reward of piety, and added profuseness to the seven deadly sins. She knew sackcloth to be cheaper than brocade, and ashes than sweet powder.

Her heart sympathized with every cup that was broken, and she instituted a fast for each domestic misfortune. She had converted her ladder into a study, and the greater part of her library consisted of manuals for fasting days. By these arts, and this way of life, she seemed to enjoy as great a freedom from inordinate desires, as the persons might be supposed to do, who were favoured with her smiles or her conversation.

To this lady was Clelia admitted; and after the year of probation assumed the veil.

Among many others who had solicited her notice, before she became a member of this convent, was Leander, a young physician of great learning and ingenuity. His personal accomplishments were at least equal to those of any of his rivals, and his passion was superior. He urged in his behalf all that wit, inspired by fondness, and recommended by person, dress, and equipage, could insinuate; but in vain. She grew angry at solicitations with which she resolved never to comply, and which she found so difficult to evade.

But Clelia now had assumed the veil, and Leander was the most miserable of mortals. He had not so high an opinion of his fair-one's sanctity and zeal, as some other of her admirers: but he had a conviction of her beauty, and that altogether irresistible. His extravagant passion had produced in him a jealousy that was not easily eluded:

*At regina dolor—
Quid non sensit amor?*

He had observed his mistress go more frequently to her confessor, a young and blooming ecclesiastic, than was, perhaps, necessary for so much apparent purity, or, as he thought, consistent with it. It was enough to put a lover on the rack, and it had this effect upon Leander. His suspicions were by no means lessened, when he found the convent to which Clelia had given the preference before all others, was one where this young friar supplied a confessional chair.

It happened that Leander was brought to the abbess in the capacity of a physician, and he had one more opportunity offered him of beholding Clelia through the grate.

She, quite shocked at his appearance, burst out into a sudden rage, inveighing bitterly against his presumption, and calling loudly on the name of the blessed Virgin and the holy friar. The convent was, in short, alarmed; nor was Clelia capable of being pacified till the good man was called, in order to allay, by suitable applications, the emotions raised by this unexpected interview.

Leander grew daily more convinced, that it was not only verbal communica-
tions

tions which passed between Clelia and the friar. This, however, he did not think himself fully warranted to disclose, till an accident, of a singular nature gave him an opportunity of receiving more ample testimony.

The confessor had a favourite spaniel, which he had lost for some time, and was informed at length that he was killed, at a village in the neighbourhood, being evidently mad. The friar was at first not much concerned; but in a little time recollected that the dog had snapped his fingers the very day before his elopement. A physician's advice was thought expedient on the occasion, and Leander was the next physician. He told him with great frankness, that no prescription he could write had the sanction of so much experience as immersion in sea-water. The friar, therefore, the next day, set forward upon his journey; while Leander, not without a mischievous kind of satisfaction, conveyed the following lines to Clelia.

MY CHARMING CLELIA,

THOUGH I yet love you to distraction, I cannot but suspect that you have granted favours to your confessor, which you might, with greater innocence, have granted to Leander. All I have to add, is this, that amorous intercourses of

this nature, which you have enjoyed with friar Laurence, put you under the like necessity with him of seeking a remedy in the ocean. Adieu!

LEANDER.

Imagine Clelia guilty; and then imagine her confusion. To rail was insignificant, and to blame her physician was absurd, when she found herself under a necessity of pursuing his advice. The whole society was made acquainted with the journey she was undertaking, and the causes of it. It were uncharitable to suppose the whole community under the same constraint with the unhappy Clelia. However, the greater part thought it decent to attend her. Some went as her companions, some for exercise, some for amusement, and the abbess herself as guardian of her train, and concerned in her society's misfortunes.

What use Leander made of his discovery is not known. Perhaps, when he had been successful in banishing the hypocrite, he did not shew himself very solicitous in his endeavours to reform the sinner.

N. B. Written when I went to be dipped in the salt-water.

ESSAY XVI.

ON VANITY.

HISTORY preserves the memory of empires and of states, with which it necessarily interweaves that of heroes, kings, and statesmen. Biography affords a place to the remarkable characters of private men. There are likewise other subordinate testimonies, which serve to perpetuate, at least prolong, the memories of men, whose characters and stations give them no claim to a place in story. For instance, when a person fails of making that figure in the world which he makes in the eyes of his own relations or himself, he is rarely dignified any farther than with his picture whilst he is living, or with an inscription upon his monument after his decease. Inscriptions have been so fallacious, that we begin to expect little from them beside elegance of style. To inveigh against the

writers for their manifest want of truth, were as absurd as to censure Homer for the beauties of an imaginary character: but even paintings, in order to gratify the vanity of the person who bespeaks them, are taught, now-a-days, to flatter like epitaphs.

Falsehoods upon a tomb or monument may be intitled to some excuse in the affection, the gratitude, and piety, of surviving friends. Even grief itself disposes us to magnify the virtues of a relation, as visible objects also appear larger through tears. But the man who, through an idle vanity suffers his features to be belied or exchanged for others of a more agreeable make, may with great truth be said to lose his property in the portrait. In like manner, if he encourage the painter to bely his dress, he seems

to transfer his claim to the man with whose station his assumed trappings are connected.

I remember a bag-piper, whose physiognomy was so remarkable and familiar to a club he attended, that it was agreed to have his picture placed over their chimney-piece. There was this remarkable in the fellow, that he chose always to go barefoot, though he was daily offered a pair of shoes. However, when the painter had been so exact as to omit this little piece of dress, the fellow offered all he had in the world, the whole produce of three nights harmony, to have those feet covered in the effigie, which he so much scorned to cover in the original. Perhaps he thought it a disgrace to his instrument to be eternized in the hands of so much apparent poverty. However, when a person of low station adorns him-

self with trophies to which he has no pretensions to aspire, he should consider the picture as actually telling a lye to posterity.

The absurdity of this is evident, if a person assume to himself a mitre, a blue garter, or a coronet, improperly; but station may be falsified by other decorations, as well as these.

But I am driven into this grave discourse, on a subject perhaps not very important, by a real fit of spleen. I this morning saw a fellow drawn in a night-gown of so rich a stuff, that the expence, had he purchased such a one, would more than half have ruined him; and another coxcomb, seated by his painter in a velvet chair, who would have been surprized at the deference paid him, had he been offered a cushion.

ESSAY XVII.

AN ADVENTURE.

— GAUDENT PRÆNOMINE MOLLES
AURICULÆ —

IT is a very convenient piece of knowledge for a person upon a journey to know the compellations with which it is proper to address those he happens to meet by his way. Some accuracy here may be of use to him who would be well directed either in the length or the tendency of his road; or be freed from any itinerary difficulties incident to those who do not know the country. It may not be indeed imprudent to accost a passenger with a title superior to what he may appear to claim. This will seldom fail to diffuse a wonderful alacrity in his countenance; and be, perhaps, a method of securing you from any mistake of greater importance.

I was led into these observations by some solitudes I lately underwent, on account of my ignorance in these peculiarities. Being somewhat more versed in books than I can pretend to be in the orders of men, it was my fortune to undertake a journey, which I was to perform by means of enquiries. I had passed a number of miles without any sort of difficulty, by help of the manifold instructions that had been given me on my setting out. At length, being something dubious concerning my way,

I met a person, whom, from his night-cap and several domestic parts of dress, I deemed to be of the neighbourhood. His station of life appeared to me to be what we call a gentleman-farmer; a sort of subaltern character, in respect of which the world seems not invariably determined. It is, in short, what King Charles the Second esteemed the happiest of all stations; superior to the toilsome task and ridiculous dignity of constables; and as much inferior to the intricate practice and invidious decisions of a justice of peace. 'Honest man,' says I, 'be so good as to inform me whether I am in the way of Mirlington?' He replied, with a sort of furliness, that he knew nothing of the matter; and turned away with as much disgust as though I had called him rogue or rascal.

I did not readily penetrate the cause of his displeasure, but proceeded on my way, with hopes to find other means of information. The next I met was a young fellow, dressed in all the pride of rural spruceness; and beside him walked a girl in a dress agreeable to that of her companion. As I presumed him by no means averse to appear considerable in the eyes of his mistress, I supposed a compliment

compliment might not be disagreeable; and enquiring the road to Mirlington, addressed him by the name of 'Honesty.' The fellow, whether to shew his wit before his mistress, or whether he was displeased with my familiarity, I cannot tell, directed me to follow a part of my face, (which I was well assured could be no guide to me) and that other parts would follow of consequence.

The next I met, appeared, by his look and gait, to stand high in his own opinion. I therefore judged the best way of proceeding was to adapt my phrase to his own ideas; and, saluting him by the name of 'Sir,' desired to obtain some insight into my road. My gentleman, without hesitation, gave me ample instructions for the rest of my journey.

I passed on, musing with myself, why an appellation relative to fortune should be preferred to one founded on merit; when I happened to behold a gentleman examining a fun-dial in his garden. 'Friend,' says I, 'will you tell me what a clock it is?' He made me no sort of answer; and seemed as much dissatisfied with my openness of temper as with the confidence I placed in him. The refusal of an answer in this case was not of much importance. I proceeded on my way, and happened to meet a very old woman, whom I determined to accost by the appellation of 'Dame;' and withal wished her a good-night.

But, alas! she seemed so little pleased with the manner of my address, that she returned me no manner of thanks for my kind wishes as to her repose. It is not clear whether my phrase was faulty, in regard to her dignity, or in respect of her age: but it is very probable she might conclude it an impropriety in respect of both.

I had by this time found the inconvenience of an utter ignorance in rural distinctions. The future part of my journey afforded me yet further means of conviction. I was exposed to the danger of three quicksands, by calling a girl 'Sweetheart,' instead of 'Madam;' and was within a foot of rushing down a precipice, by calling another 'Porsooth,'

who might easily have told me how to avoid it.

In short, I found myself well or ill used, as I happened, or not, to suit my salutations to people's ideas of their own rank. Towards the last part of my stage, I was to pass a brook, so much swelled by land-floods, that the proper way through it was undistinguishable. A well dressed gentleman was passing a bridge on my left-hand. It was here of much importance for me to succeed in my enquiry. I was therefore meditating within myself which might be the most endearing of all appellations; and at last besought him to give me some instructions, under the name of 'Honest Friend.' He was not seemingly so much pleased as I assured myself he would be, and trudged onward without reply. After this, I had not gone many steps (out of the path, for so it proved) before I found myself and horse plunged headlong in the brook; and my late honest friend in a laughter at our downfall.

I made a shift, however, to recover both myself and horse; and, after a few more difficulties, arrived at the end of my journey. I have since made strict enquiry into the due application of such inferior titles, and may, perhaps, communicate them to you on some future occasion. In the mean time, you may, if you please, consider the vast importance of superior titles, when there is no one so inconsiderable but there is also a mind that it can influence.

When you reflect upon this subject, you will, perhaps, be less severe on your friend —, who, you tell me, is now trafficking for this species of dignity.

Learn to be wise, then, from others harm; and do not forget to observe decorum, on every occasion that you may have to address him for the future. Pretend no more at the close of your epistle to be his faithful servant, much less his affectionate one. Tender your services with great respect, if you do not chuse to do it with profound veneration. He will certainly have no more to do with sincerity and truth. Remember—

Male si palpere, recalcitrat.

ESSAY XVIII.

ON MODESTY AND IMPUDENCE.

WHEN a man of genius does not print, he discovers himself by nothing more than by his abilities in dispute. However, let him shew solidity in his opinions, together with ease, elegance, and vivacity, in his expressions; yet, if an impudent face be found to baffle him, he shall be judged inferior in other respects. I mean, he will grow cheap in mixed company: for as to select judges, they will form their opinions by another scale; with these, a single epistle, penned with propriety, will more effectually prove his wit than an hundred defects in his conversation will demonstrate the reverse.

It is true, there is nothing displays a genius, I mean a quickness of genius, more than a dispute; as two diamonds, encountering, contribute to each other's lustre. But perhaps the odds is much against the man of taste in this particular.

Bathfulness is more frequently connected with good sense, than we find assurance: and impudence, on the other hand, is often the mere effect of downright stupidity. On this account, the man of genius has as much the advantage of his antagonist, as a race-horse, carrying a small weight, has over his rival that bears a larger: modesty, like the weight to which I allude, not suffering it's owner to exert his real strength, which effrontery is allowed to do, without lett or impediment.

It may be urged, and justly enough, that it is common to be partial to the modest man; and that diffidence makes good amends for any restraint it lays us under, by the prejudice it gives every hearer in our favour. But, indeed, this can only happen where it meets with the most ingenuous judges. Otherwise, a laugh will carry the day, with which the ignorant side is generally best accommodated.

In order to put these antagonists upon a somewhat more equal footing. I have invented the following instrument; for the sole structure and sale of which, I am not without hopes of procuring a patent. What I mean, is an artificial laughter. There are few so little conversant in toys,

but must have seen instruments mechanically framed to counterfeit the voices of different birds. The quail-pipe is brought to such perfection as even to de-lude the very species. The cuckow has been mimicked with no less accuracy. Would it not then be an easy matter to represent the laugh of this empty tribe, which has in itself something artificial; and is not more affected than it is particular? For the convenience of the person that bears it, it's dimensions should be so contrived as that it might be played on in his pocket. Does it not seem feasible, that a laughter of this kind may be brought to answer every purpose of that noise which it resembles? If there be occasion for an expletive, let the owner seek it in his fob; as his antagonist would find his account in a loud oath or an empty pun. If there be need of a good sounding cadence at the close of a common period, it may not be amiss to harmonize a sentence by what may be called a finishing stroke. This instrument is so contrived as to produce all the variety of an human laugh; and this variation is to be regulated, not by the nature of your subject, nor the wit or humour of a rapartee, but by the disposition of the company, and the proper minute for such an interlude. But to become a master of the said machine, let the candidate for applause frequent the company of vociferous disputants, among whom he may soon learn how to perform a conversation.

One or two of these instruments I have already finished, though not indeed to the perfection at which I expect they may soon arrive. A gentleman visited me t'other day, who has the justest claim that can be to the use of them; having nothing in his character that can obscure the greatest merit, but the greatest modesty. I communicated my invention, desiring him to make trial of it on the first occasion. He did so; and when I saw him next, gave me leave to publish the following account of it's efficacy in my next advertisement. 'The first time I employed it,' said my friend 'was in a sort of controversy with a beau; who had contrived means, by the use
' of

of his snuff-box, to supply both want of language and of thought. In this manner he prolonged his argument; and really to the company, which consisted of ladies, discovered more sagacity without thinking, than I could do by it's assistance. I bethought myself immediately of your instrument, and had recourse to it. I observed in what part of his discourse he most employed his fingers, and had suddenly recourse to mine, with equal emphasis and significance. The art was not discovered, ere I had routed my antagonist; having seated myself in a dark corner, where my operations were not discernible. I observed, that as he found himself more closely pressed, he grew more and more assiduous in his application to his snuff-box, much as an otter closely pursued is forced to throw up bubbles that shew his distress. I therefore discovered gradually less and less occasion for speaking; and for thinking, none at all. I played only a flourish in answer to the argument at his finger's ends; and, after a while, found him as mortal in this part as in any other. When his cause was just expiring, after a very long pursuit, and many fruitless turnings and evasions in the course of it, I sounded my instrument, with as much alacrity as a huntsman does his horn on the death of an hare.

The next whom I engaged was a more formidable disputant; and I own, with a sense of gratitude, that your instrument alone could render me a match for him. His strength of argument was his strength of lungs; and he was, unquestionably, an able antagonist. However, if your machine put me

upon a par with him, I think I may say, without vanity, that, in point of reason, I had the upper hand. I shall only add, that as it was habitual for him to answer arguments by vociferation, so it became needless for me to give him any answer of a better kind.

Thus far my friend. I do not question but there will appear artists, that shall undertake to instruct the dissident, the submissive, and the bashful, how to perform the whole gamut of oratorical and risible music: and as there is a kind of humorous laughter, which draws all others into it's own vortex, I need not here assert that I would have this branch very much inculcated.

Neither is this instrument of importance in dispute alone, or controversy; but wherever one man's faculties are more prone to laughter than another's. Trifles will burst one man's sides, which will not disturb the features of another; and a laugh one cannot join, is almost as irksome as a lamentation. 'Tis like a peal rung after a wedding; where a whole parish shall be stunned with noise, because they want that occasion to rejoice, which the persons at least imagine to be their lot that occasioned it. The sounds are pleasing to their ears, who find them conformable to their own ideas; but those who are not in temper, or unconcerned, find them a stupefying repetition.

When, therefore, my mind is not in tune with another's, what strikes his, will not vibrate on mine. All I then have to do, is to counterfeit a laugh: which is an operation as artificial, as the machine I have been describing.

ESSAY XIX.

THE HISTORY OF DON PEDRO ****

THE actions of our lives, even those we call most important, seem as much subject to trifles as our very lives themselves. We frame very notable projects in imagination, and promise to ourselves an equal term of life. 'Tis, however, in the power of the minutest accident, to shorten the one, and disconcert the other. 'Tis with mankind as with certain fire-engines, whose motion may be stopped in the midst of it's ra-

pidity, by the interposition of straw in a particular part of them.

The following translation from the original Spanish will sufficiently illustrate the foregoing assertion. Don Pedro **** was one of the principal grandees of his age and country. He had a genius equal to his birth, and a disposition remarkably contemplative. 'Twas his custom, on this account, to retire from the world at stated periods, and to indulge

dulge himself in all the mazes of a fine imagination. It happened, as he one day sat in his study, that he fixed his eye on a neighbouring spider. The most trivial object (if any natural object can be termed so) served him frequently for the foundation of some moral and sublime reflection. He surveyed the creature attentively, and indulged the bias of his thought, till he was lost in the excursions of a profound reverie. The curious workmanship of this unregarded animal brought at once into his mind the whole art of fortification. He observed the deficiency of human skill, and that no cunning could have contrived her so proper an habitation. He found that no violence could effect the extremities of her lines, but what was immediately perceptible, and liable to alarm her at the center. He observed the road by which she sallied forth, served to convey intelligence from without, at the same time that it added strength and stability to the work within. He was at once surprised and pleased with an object which, although common, he happened not to have beheld in the same light, or with the same attention. From this instant he bent his thoughts upon the advancement of military fortification: and he often would declare it was this trivial incident that gave him a relish for that study, which he afterwards pursued with such application and success.

He spent, in short, so much time upon the attainment of this science, that he grew as capable of executing any part of it, as speculation alone could render him. Nothing wanted now, but practice, to complete the fame of his abilities. That, in short, was his next pursuit. He became desirous of experiencing, what had been so successful in imagination, and to make those mural sallies, which had been attended there with victory. To this end he had little to do, but excite the ambition of his young monarch; to enforce, by testimony of his friends, his qualifications for the post he sought; and, on the first delivery of his petition, to obtain preferment from the king.

This happened to be a time of the profoundest tranquillity: little agreeable to a person eager of glory, furnished with skill, and conscious of abilities. Such was this ingenious nobleman. He well knew the ambition of princes, and of his monarch in particular. But he

was not acquainted with his own. That imperious and subtle passion is often most predominant when 'tis least perceived. When it once prevails in any great degree, we find our reason grow subservient, and, instead of checking or contradicting, it stoops to flatter and to authorize it. Instead of undeceiving, she confirms us in our error; and even levels the mounds, and smooths the obstructions, which it is her natural province to interpose. This was the case of Don Pedro. The delicacy of his taste increased his sensibility; and his sensibility made him more a slave. The mind of man, like the finer parts of matter, the more delicate it is, naturally admits the more deep and the more visible impressions. The purest spirits are the soonest apt to take flame. Let us therefore be the more candid to him, on account of the vivacity of his passions, seduced, as indeed he was, into very unwarrantable schemes.

He had, in brief, conceived a project, to give his master an universal monarchy. He had calculated every article with the utmost labour and precision, and intended, within a few days, to present his project to the king.

Spain was then in a state of affluence; had a large army on foot; together with means and opportunities of raising an immense one. 'Twere impossible to answer for the possible events that might destroy their hopes of such an enterprise. Difficulty often attends the execution of things the most feasible and well contrived in theory. But whoever was acquainted with the author of this project, knew the posture of affairs in Europe at that time, the ambition of the prince, and the many circumstances that conspired to favour it, might have thought the project would have been agreed to; put in practice, and, without some particular interposition of fortune, been attended with success—But Fortune did not put herself to any particular trouble about the matter.

Don Pedro, big with vast designs, was one day walking in his fields. He was promised next morning an audience of the king. He was preparing himself for a conversation, which might prove of so much consequence to all mankind; when walking thoughtfully along, and regardless of his path, his foot happened to stumble and to overturn an ant's nest. He cast his eyes upon the ground, to see the

the occasion of his mistake, where he spied the little animals in the most miserable confusion. He had the delicacy of sentiment to be really sorry for what he had done; and, putting himself in their condition, began to reflect upon the consequence. It might be an age, to them, ere they could recover their tranquillity. He viewed them with a sort of smile, to find the anxiety they underwent for such perishable habitations. Yet he considered that his contempt was only the effect of his own superiority; and that there might be some created beings to whom his own species must appear as trifling. His remark did not cease here. He considered his future enterprise, with an eye to such a race of beings. He found it must appear to them in a light as disadvantageous, as the ambition and vain glory of an ant would, to himself. 'How ridiculous,' he said, 'must this republic appear to me, could I discern it's actions, as it has probably many, that are analogous to those of human nature! Suppose them at continual variance about the property of a grain of sand. Suppose one, that had acquired a few sands more to his portion—as also one grain of wheat, and one small particle of barley flour—should think himself qualified to tyrannize over his equals, and to lord it, uncontrolled. Consider him, on this account, not contented to make use of the numerous legs with

which nature has supplied him, borne aloft by a couple of slaves within the hollow of an husk of wheat, five or six others, at the same time, attending solemnly upon the procession. Suppose, lastly, that among this people, the prime minister should persuade the rest to levy war upon a neighbouring colony; and this in order to be stiled the sovereign of two hillocks, instead of one; while perhaps their present condition leaves them nothing to wish besides superfluities. At the same time, it is in the power of the most inconsiderable among mankind, nay, of any species of animals superior to their own, to destroy at once the minister and people all together: this is doubtless very ridiculous; yet this is doubtless my own case, in respect to many subordinate beings, and very certainly of the Supreme one. Farewel, then, ye air-built citadels! Farewel, visions of unsolid glory! Don Pedro will seek no honour of so equivocal an acceptance, as to degrade his character to a superior species, in proportion as it exalts him before his own.'

See here a just conclusion! In short, he found it so fairly drawn, as immediately to drop his project, leave the army, and retire: of which whimsical relation it may be well enough observed, That a spider had enslaved the world, had not an ant obstructed his design.

ESSAY XX.

UPON ENVY.

TO A FRIEND, R. G.

WHENCE is it, my friend, that I feel it impossible to envy you although, hereafter, your qualifications may make whole millions do so? For, believe me, when I affirm, that I deem it much more superfluous, to wish you honours to gratify your ambition, than to wish you ambition enough to make your honours satisfactory.

It seems an hard case, that envy should be the consequence of merit, at the same time that scorn so naturally attends the want of it. 'Tis however in some measure, perhaps, an unavoidable (and perhaps in some sense an useful) passion, in all the most heroic natures; where, refined through certain strainers, it takes

the name of emulation. 'Tis a pain arising in our breasts, on contemplation of the superior advantages of another: and it's tendency is truly good, under some certain regulations.

All honour very evidently depends upon comparison; and consequently, the more numerous are our superiors, the smaller portion of it falls to our share. Considered relatively, we are dwarfs, or giants; though, considered absolutely, we are neither. However the love of this relative grandeur is made a part of our natures; and the use of emulation is to excite our diligence in pursuit of power, for the sake of beneficence. The instances of it's perversion are obvious to every

every one's observation. A vicious mind, instead of it's own emolument, studies the debasement of his superior. A person, to please one of this cast, must needs divest himself of all useful qualities; and in order to be beloved, discover nothing that is truly amiable. One may very safely fix our esteem on those whom we hear some people depreciate. Merit is to them as uniformly odious, as the sun itself to the birds of darkness. An author, to judge of his own merit, may fix his eye upon this tribe of men; and suffer his satisfaction to arise in due proportion to their discontent. Their disapprobation will sufficiently influence every generous bosom in his favour; and I would as implicitly give my applause to one whom they pull to pieces, as the inhabitants of Pegu worship those that have been devoured by apes.

'Tis another perversion of this passion, though of a less enormous nature, when it merely stimulates us to rival others in points of no intrinsic worth. To equal others in the useless parts of learning; to pursue riches for the sake of an equipage as brilliant; to covet an equal

knowledge of a table; to vie in jockeyship, or cunning at a bett. These, and many other rivalships, answer not the genuine purposes of emulation.

I believe the passion is oftentimes derived from a too partial view of our own and others excellencies. We behold a man possessed of some particular advantage, and we immediately reflect upon it's deficiency in ourselves. We wait not to examine what others we have to balance it: We envy another man's bodily accomplishments; when our mental ones might preponderate, would we put them into the scale. Should we ask our own bosoms whether we would change situations altogether, I fancy self-love would, generally, make us prefer our own condition. But if our sentiments remain the same after such an examination, all we can justly endeavour is our own real advancement. To meditate his detriment either in fortune, power, or reputation, at the same time that it is infamous, has often a tendency to depress ourselves: But let us confine our emulation to points of real worth; to riches, power, or knowledge, only that we may rival others in beneficence.

ESSAY XXI.

A VISION.

INGENIOUS was the device of those celebrated worthies, who, for the more effectual promulgation of their well-grounded maxims, first pretended to divine inspiration. Peace be to their names! May the turf lie lightly on their breast, and the verdure over their grave be as perpetual as their memories! Well knew they, questionless, that a proceeding of this nature must afford an excuse to their modesty, as well as add a weight to their instructions. For, from the beginning of time, if we may believe the histories of the best repute, man has ever found a delight in giving credit to surprising lies. There was indeed necessary a degree of credit, previous to this delight; and there was as necessary a delight, in order to enforce any degree of credit. But so it was, that the pleasure rose, in a proportion to the wonder; and if the love of wonder was but gratified, no matter whether the tale was founded upon a witch or an Egeria; on a rat, a

pigeon, the pummel of a sword, a bloated sibyl, or a three foot stool.

Of all writers that bear any resemblance to these originals, those who approach the nearest, are such as describe their extraordinary dreams and visions. Of ostentation we may not, peradventure, accuse them, who claim to themselves no other than the merit of spectators. Of want of abilities we must not censure them; when we are given to know that their imagination had no more part in the affair, than a whited wall has in those various figures which some crafty artist represents thereon.

The first meditation of a solitary, is the behaviour of men in active life, 'Hapless species,' I cry'd, 'how very grossly art thou mistaken! How very supine, while youth permits thee to gain the prize of virtue by restraint! How very resolute when thine age leaves nothing to restrain thee! Thou givest a loose to thine inclinations, till

‘ Still they lose their very being; and, like a lamp overwhelmed with oil, are extinguished by indulgence. What folly to dream of virtue, when there is no longer room for self-denial; or, when the enemy expires by sickness, to demand the honour of a triumph!’—Musing upon this subject, I fell into a profound slumber: and the vision with which it furnished me, shall supply materials for this essay.

I was, methought, transported into a winding valley, on each side of whose area, so far as my eye could see, were held up (in the manner of a picture) all the pleasing objects either of art or nature. Hills rose one beyond another, crowned with trees, or adorned with edifices; broken rocks contrasted with lawns, and foaming rivers poured headlong over them; gilded spires enlivened even the sunshine; and lonesome ruins, by the side of woods, gave a solemnity to the shade. It would be endless, or rather impossible, to give an idea of the vast variety. It seemed as though people, of whatever inclinations, might here meet with their favourite object.

While I stood amazed, and even confounded, at so astonishing a landscape; an old man approached towards me, and offered his assistance in alleviating my surprise. ‘ You observe,’ says he, ‘ in the middle path, a train of sprightly female pilgrims*, conducted by a matron† of a graver cast. She is habited, as you may observe, in a robe far more plain and simple than that of any amidst her followers. It is her province to restrain her pupils, that the objects glittering on each side may not seduce them to make excursions, from which they scarce ever find their right way again. You may not, perhaps, suspect the gulphs and precipices that lie intermixed amidst a scenery so delightful to the eye. You see, indeed, at a considerable distance, the gilt dome of a temple raised on columns of the whitest marble. I must inform you, that within this temple resides a lady ‡, weaving wreaths of immortal amaranth for that worthy matron, if she exert her authority; and as their obedience is more or less entire, she has also garlands of inferior lustre to recompense the ladies in her train.

‘ Your own sagacity,’ added he, ‘ will supply the place of farther instructions;’ and then vanished in an instant.

The space before me, as it appeared, was crossed by four successive rivers. Over these were thrown as many bridges, and beyond each of these streams the ground seemed to vary its degree of lustre, as much as if it had lain under a different climate. On the side of each of these rivers appeared, as I thought, a receptacle for travellers; so that the journey seemed to be portioned into four distinct stages. It is possible that these were meant to represent the periods of a man’s life, which may be distinguished by the names of infancy, youth, manhood, and old age.

During the first stage, our travellers proceeded without much disturbance. Their excursions were of no greater extent than to crop a primrose, or a daisy, that grew on the way side: and in their their governess indulged them. She gave them but few checks, and they afforded her but little occasion. But when they arrived at the second period, the case then was greatly altered. The young ladies grew visibly enamoured of the beauties on each side; and the governess began to feel a consciousness of her duty to restrain them. They petitioned clamorously to make one short excursion, and met with a decent refusal. One of them, that visibly shewed herself the greatest vixen and romper amongst them, had a thousand arts and stratagems to circumvent her well meaning governess. I must here mention, what I remarked afterwards, that some of the pupils felt greater attractions in one stage; and some in another. And the scene before them being well variegated with mossy banks and purling streams, frisking lambs and piping shepherds; inspired a longing that was inexpressible, to one that seemed of an amorous complexion. She requested to make a short digression; pointed to the band of shepherds dancing; and, as I observed, presented a glass, through which the matron might distinctly view them. The governess applied the glass, and it was wonderful to trace the change it effected. She, who before had with much constancy opposed the prayers of her petitioner, now began to lean towards her demands;

* The Passions.

† Reason.

‡ Virtue.

§ Love.

and, as if she herself were not quite indifferent to the scene of pleasure she had beheld, grew remiss in her discipline, softened the language of dissent; and with a gentle reprimand, suffered her pupil to elope. After this, however, she winked her eyes; that she might not at least bear testimony to the step she did not approve. When the lady had gratified her curiosity, she returned for the present; but with an appetite more inflamed, and more impatient to repeat her frolic. The governess appeared uneasy, and to repent of her own compliance; and reason good she had, considering the confidence it gave her pupil, and the weight it took from her own authority.

They were not passed far from the second stage of their journey, ere they all determined to rebel, and submit to the tyranny of their leader no longer.

Another now took the lead; and seizing an embroidered handkerchief, completely hood-winked the directress. All now was tumult, anarchy, disagreement and confusion. They led their guide along, blind-fold, not without proposals of downright murder. They soon lost sight of the regular path, and strode along with amazing rapidity. I should, however, except some few*, who, being of a complexion naturally languid, and thus deprived of their protectress, had neither constancy to keep the road, nor spirit enough to stray far from it. These found the utmost of their inclinations gratified, in treasuring up shells from the banks of the river, scooping fossils from the rocks, or preserving plants that grew in the valley. A moth or butterfly afforded them a chase, and a grub or beetle was a suitable companion. But to return to the vagabonds.

The lady that performed the feat of blinding her governess, for a time, bore the chief rule; and held the rest in a state of servitude †. She seemed to be indeed formed for that power and grandeur, which was her delight; being of a stature remarkably tall, with an air of dignity in her countenance. Not but others would sometimes insist upon some temporary gratification. As they shaped their way to a great city, one ‡ would

loll and loiter on a bed of roses; another would join the dance of shepherds, and sometimes retire with § one into the covert. A || third would not move a step farther, till she had gathered some ore that was washed from the mountains. When they entered the city, their dissipation was yet more observable. One** intoxicated herself with cordials; another †† went in quest of lace and equipage. The lady ‡‡, however, at this time the most enterprising, and who (as I mentioned before) had given such a turn to their affairs, discovered a strange fondness herself for lawn and ermine, embroidered stars and golden collars. However difficult it seemed to reach them, or how little necessary soever they seemed to happiness, these alone engaged her attention; and to these alone her hopes aspired. Nay, she went so far as in failure of these, to resolve on misery and wilful wretchedness.

She at length succeeded, at least so far as to find how little they enhanced her happiness; and her former compeers, having ruined their constitutions, were once again desirous to have their queen reign over them. In short, their loyalty regained the ascendant; inasmuch that with one consent they removed the bandage from her eyes, and vowed to obey her future directions.

She promised to procure them all the happiness that was consistent with their present state; and advised them all to follow her towards the path they had forsaken.

Our travellers, in a little time after this, passed over the bridge that introduced them to their closing stage. The subjects, very orderly, repentant and demissive; the governess, more rigid and imperious than ever. The former withered, decrepid, languishing; the latter, in greater vigour, and more beautiful than before. Time appeared to produce in her a very opposite effect to that it wrought in her companions. She seemed, indeed, no more that easy ductile creature, insulted and borne away by the whims of her companions. She appeared more judicious in the commands she gave, and more rigorous in the execution. In short, both her own activity, and the supine lethargy of those

* The Virtuoso-passion. † Ambition. ‡ Indolence. § Gallantry.
‡ Avarice. ** Ebriety. †† Pride and Vanity. ‡‡ Ambition.

whom she conducted, united to make way for her unlimited authority. Now, indeed, a more limited rule might have secured obedience, and maintained a regularity. The ladies were but little struck with the glare of objects on each side the way. One alone I must except, whom I beheld look wishfully, with a retorted eye, towards the golden ore washed down by the torrents. The governess represented, in the strongest terms, that these materials could not be imported into the realms they were about to enter. That, were this even the case, they could be there of no importance. However, she had not extirpated the bias of this craving dame, when they approached the temple to which I formerly alluded.

The temple stood upon a lofty hill, half encircled with trees of never-fading verdure. Between the milk-white columns (which were of the Doric order, the bases gilt, as also the capitals), a blaze of glory issued of such superior lustre, that none beside the governess was able to approach it. She, indeed, with a dejected countenance, drew near unto the goddess; who gently waved her hand in the way of salutation.

The matron seemed less dazzled, than delighted, with her excessive beauty. She accosted her with reverence, and with much diffidence began to mention their pretension to her favour. 'She must own,' she had been very remiss in the begin-

ning of her government; she hoped it would be attributed to inexperience in the subtle wiles of her fellow travellers. She flattered herself, that her severity towards the conclusion of her journey might in some sort make atonement for her misbehaviour in the beginning. Lastly, that she sometimes found it impossible to hear the dictates of the goddess amid the clamours of her pupils, and the din of their persuasions.

To this the goddess made reply—'You have heard,' said she, 'no doubt, that the favours I bestow, are by no means consistent with a state of inactivity. The only time when you were allowed an opportunity to deserve them, was the time when your pupils were the most refractory and perverse. The honours you expect in my court are proportioned to the difficulty of a good undertaking. May you, hereafter, partake them, in reward of your more vigorous conduct: for the present, you are little entitled to any recompence from me. As to your pupils, I observe, they have passed sentence upon themselves.'

At this instant of time the bell rung for supper, and awaked me: I found the gardener by my side, prepared to plant a parcel of trees; and that I had slumbered away the hours, in which I should have given him suitable directions,

ESSAY XXII.

UNCONNECTED THOUGHTS ON GARDENING.

GARDENING may be divided into three species—kitchen-gardening—parterre-gardening—and landscape, or picturesque-gardening: which latter is the subject intended in the following pages. It consists in pleasing the imagination by scenes of grandeur, beauty, or variety. Convenience merely has no share here, any farther than as it pleases the imagination.

Perhaps the division of the pleasures of imagination, according as they are struck by the great, the various, and the beautiful, may be accurate enough for my present purpose: why each of them affects us with pleasure may be traced in

other authors. See Burke, Hutchinson, Gerard, the Theory of agreeable Sensations, &c.

There seem however to be some objects, which afford a pleasure not reducible to either of the foregoing heads. A ruin, for instance, may be neither new to us, nor majestic, nor beautiful, yet afford that pleasing melancholy which proceeds from a reflection on decayed magnificence. For this reason, an able gardener should avail himself of objects, perhaps, not very striking; if they serve to connect ideas, that convey reflections of the pleasing kind.

* Garden-scenes may perhaps be divided into the sublime, the beautiful, and the melancholy or pensive; to which last I know not but we may assign a middle place betwixt the former two, as being in some sort composed of both. See Burke's Sublime.

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Objects

Objects should indeed be less calculated to strike the immediate eye, than the judgment or well-formed imagination; as in painting.

It is no objection to the pleasure of novelty, that it makes an ugly object more disagreeable. It is enough that it produces a superiority betwixt things in other respects equal. It seems, on some occasions, to go even farther. Are there not broken rocks and rugged grounds, to which we can hardly attribute either beauty or grandeur; and yet, when introduced near an extent of lawn, impart a pleasure equal to more shapely scenes? Thus a series of lawn, though ever so beautiful, may satiate and cloy, unless the eye passes to them from wilder scenes; and then they acquire the grace of novelty.

Variety appears to me to derive good part of its effect from novelty; as the eye, passing from one form or colour, to a form or colour of a different kind, finds a degree of novelty in its present object, which affords immediate satisfaction.

Variety however, in some instances, may be carried to such excess as to lose its whole effect. I have observed ceilings so crammed with stucco ornaments, that, although of the most different kinds, they have produced an uniformity. A sufficient quantity of undecorated space is necessary to exhibit such decorations to advantage.

Ground should first be considered with an eye to its peculiar character; whether it be the grand, the savage, the sprightly, the melancholy, the horrid, or the beautiful. As one or other of these characters prevail, one may somewhat strengthen its effect, by allowing every part some denomination, and then supporting its title by suitable appendages. For instance, The lover's walk may have assignation seats, with proper mottoes—urns to faithful lovers—trophies, garlands, &c. by means of art.

What an advantage must some Italian seats derive from the circumstance of being situate on ground mentioned in the classics? And even in England, wherever a park or garden happens to have been the scene of any event in history, one would surely avail one's self of that circumstance, to make it more interesting to the imagination. Mottoes should allude to it; columns, &c. record it; verses moralize upon it; and curiosity receive its share of pleasure.

In designing a house and gardens, it is happy when there is an opportunity of maintaining a subordination of parts; the house so luckily placed as to exhibit a view of the whole design. I have sometimes thought that there was room for it to resemble an epic or dramatic poem. It is rather to be wished than required, that the more striking scenes may succeed those which are less so.

Taste depends much upon temper. Some prefer Tibullus to Virgil, and Virgil to Homer—Hagley to Persfield, and Persfield to the Welsh mountains. This occasions the different preferences that are given to situations. A garden strikes us most, where the grand and the pleasing succeed, not intermingle with, each other.

I believe, however, the sublime has generally a deeper effect than the merely beautiful.

I use the words Landskip and Prospect, the former as expressive of home scenes, the latter of distant images. Prospects should take in the blue distant hills; but never so remotely, that they be not distinguishable from clouds. Yet this mere extent is what the vulgar value.

Landskip should contain variety enough to form a picture upon canvas; and this is no bad test, as I think the landskip painter is the gardener's best designer. The eye requires a sort of balance here; but not so as to encroach upon probable nature. A wood, or hill, may balance a house or obelisk; for exactness would be displeasing. We form our notions from what we have seen; and though, could we comprehend the universe, we might perhaps find it uniformly regular; yet the portions that we see of it, habituate our fancy to the contrary.

The eye should always look rather down upon water: customary nature makes this requisite. I know nothing more sensibly displeasing than Mr. T—'s flat ground betwixt his terraces and his water.

It is not easy to account for the fondness of former times for straight-lined avenues to their houses; straight-lined walks through their woods; and, in short, every kind of straight line; where the foot is to travel over, what the eye has done before. This circumstance is one objection. Another, somewhat of the same kind, is the repetition of the same object, tree after tree, for a length

of way together. A third is, that this identity is purchased by the loss of that variety, which the natural country supplies every where, in a greater or less degree. To stand still and survey such avenues, may afford some slender satisfaction through the change derived from perspective; but to move on continually and find no change of scene in the least attendant on our change of place, must give actual pain to a person of taste. For such an one to be condemned to pass along the famous vista * from Moscow to Petersburg, or that other from Agra to Lahor in India, must be as disagreeable a sentence, as to be condemned to labour at the galleys. I conceived some idea of the sensation he must feel, from walking but a few minutes, immured, betwixt Lord D—'s high shorn yew-hedges; which run exactly parallel, at the distance of about ten feet; and are contrived perfectly to exclude all kind of objects whatsoever.

When a building, or other object, has been once viewed from it's proper point, the foot should never travel to it by the same path which the eye has travelled over before. Lose the object, and draw nigh, obliquely.

The side-trees in vistas should be so circumstanced as to afford a probability that they grew by nature.

Ruinated structures appear to derive their power of pleasing from the irregularity of surface, which is VARIETY; and the latitude they afford the imagination, to conceive an enlargement of their dimensions, or to recollect any events or circumstances appertaining to their pristine grandeur, so far as concerns grandeur and solemnity. The breaks in them should be as bold and abrupt as possible. If mere beauty be aimed at, (which however is not their chief excellence) the waving line, with more easy transitions, will become of greater importance. Events relating to them may be simulated by numberless little artifices; but it is ever to be remembered, that high hills and sudden descents are most suitable to castles; and fertile vales, near wood and water, most imitative of the usual situation for abbeys and religious houses; large oaks, in particular, are essential to these latter;

Whose branching arms, and reverend height,
Admit a dim religious light.

A cottage is a pleasing object, partly on account of the variety it may introduce; on account of the tranquillity that seems to reign there; and perhaps (I am somewhat afraid) on account of the pride of human nature:

Longi alterius spectare laborem.

In a scene presented to the eye, objects should never lie so much to the right or left, as to give it any uneasiness in the examination. Sometimes, however, it may be better to admit valuable objects even with this disadvantage. They should else ever be seen beyond a certain angle. The eye must be easy, before it can be pleased.

No mere slope from one side to the other can be agreeable ground; the eye requires a balance, i. e. a degree of uniformity; but this may be otherwise effected, and the rule should be understood with some limitation.

—Each alley has it's brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.

Let us examine what may be said in favour of that regularity which Mr. Pope exposes. Might he not seemingly as well object to the disposition of an human face, because it has an eye or cheek that is the very picture of it's companion? Or does not Providence, who has observed this regularity in the external structure of our bodies and disregarded it within, seem to consider it as a beauty? The arms, the limbs, and the several parts of them correspond, but it is not the same case with the thorax and the abdomen. I believe one is generally solicitous for a kind of balance in a landscape; and, if I am not mistaken, the painters generally furnish one: a building for instance on one side, contrasted by a group of trees, a large oak, or a rising hill, on the other. Whence then does this taste proceed, but from the love we bear to regularity in perfection? After all, in regard to gardens, the shape of ground, the disposition of trees, and the figure of water, must be sacred to nature; and no forms must be allowed that make a discovery of art.

All trees have a character analogous to that of men: oaks are in all respects the perfect image of the manly character: in former times I should have

• In Montefquieu, on Taste.

E 2

said,

said, and in present times I think I am authorised to say, the British one: As a brave man is not suddenly either elated by prosperity or depressed by adversity, so the oak displays not its verdure on the sun's first approach; nor drops it, on his first departure. Add to this its majestic appearance, the rough grandeur of its bark, and the wide protection of its branches.

A large, branching, aged oak, is perhaps the most venerable of all inanimate objects.

Urns are more solemn, if large and plain; more beautiful, if less and ornamented. Solemnity is perhaps their point, and the situation of them should still co-operate with it.

By the way, I wonder that lead statues are not more in vogue in our modern gardens. Though they may not express the finer lines of an human body, yet they seem perfectly well calculated, on account of their duration, to embellish landscapes, were they some degrees inferior to what we generally behold. A statue in a room challenges examination, and is to be examined critically as a statue. A statue in a garden is to be considered as one part of a scene or landscape; the minuter touches are no more essential to it, than a good landscape-painter would esteem them were he to represent a statue in his picture.

Apparent art in its proper province, is almost as important as apparent nature. They contrast agreeably; but their provinces ever should be kept distinct.

Some artificial beauties are so dexterously managed, that one cannot but conceive them natural; some natural ones so extremely fortunate, that one is ready to swear they are artificial.

Concerning scenes, the more uncommon they appear, the better, provided they form a picture, and include nothing that pretends to be of nature's production, and is not. The shape of ground, the site of trees, and the fall of water, is nature's province. Whatever thwarts her is treason.

On the other hand, buildings and the works of art need have no other reference to nature than that they afford the ~~materials~~ with which the human mind is delighted.

Art should never be allowed to set a foot in the province of nature, other-

wife than clandestinely and by night. Whenever she is allowed to appear here, and men begin to compromise the difference—night, gothicism, confusion, and absolute chaos, are come again.

To see one's urns, obelisks, and waterfalls laid open; the nakedness of our beloved mistresses; the Naiads and the Dryads, exposed by that ruffian Winter to universal observation; is a severity scarcely to be supported by the help of blazing hearths, cheerful companions, and a bottle of the most grateful Burgundy.

The works of a person that builds, begin immediately to decay; while those of him who plants begin directly to improve. In this, planting promises a more lasting pleasure than building; which, were it to remain in equal perfection, would at best begin to moulder and want repairs in imagination. Now trees have a circumstance that suits our taste, and that is annual variety. It is inconvenient indeed, if they cause our love of life to take root and flourish with them; whereas the very fameness of our structures will, without the help of dilapidation, serve to wean us from our attachment to them.

It is a custom in some countries to condemn the characters of those (after death) that have neither planted a tree, nor begot a child.

The taste of the citizen and of the mere peasant are in all respects the same. The former gilds his balls; paints his stonework and statues white; plants his trees in lines or circles; cuts his yew-trees four-square or conic; or gives them what he can of the resemblance of birds, or bears, or men; squirts up his rivulets in jetteaus; in short, admires no part of nature, but her ductility; exhibits every thing that is glaring, that implies expence, or that effects a surprise, because it is unnatural. The peasant is his admirer.

It is always to be remembered in gardening, that sublimity or magnificence, and beauty or variety, are very different things. Every scene we see in nature is either tame and insipid, or compounded of those. It often happens that the same ground may receive from art, either certain degrees of sublimity and magnificence, or certain degrees of variety and beauty; or a mixture of each kind. In this case it remains to be considered in which light they can be rendered most remarkable,

remarkable, whether as objects of beauty or magnificence. Even the temper of the proprietor should not perhaps be wholly disregarded: for certain complexions of soul will prefer an orange-tree or a myrtle, to an oak or cedar. However, this should not induce a gardener to parcel out a lawn into knots of shrubbery; or invest a mountain with a garb of roses. This would be like dressing a giant in a farlenet gown, or a Saracen's head in a Brussels nightcap. Indeed the small circular clumps of firs, which I see planted upon some fine large swells, put me often in mind of a coronet placed on an elephant or camel's back. I say, a gardener should not do this, any more than a poet should attempt to write of the king of Prussia in the style of Philips. On the other side, what would become of Lesbia's sparrow, should it be treated in the same language with the anger of Achilles?

Gardeners may be divided into three sorts, the landkip gardener, the parterre gardener, and the Kitchen gardener, agreeably to our first division of gardens.

I have used the word landkip-gardeners; because, in pursuance of our present taste, in gardening, every good painter of landkip appears to me the most proper designer. The misfortune of it is, that these painters are apt to regard the execution of their work much more than the choice of subject.

The art of distancing and approximating comes truly within their sphere: the former by the gradual diminution of distinctness, and of size; the latter by the reverse. A straight-lined avenue that is widened in front, and planted there with ewe-trees, then firs, then with trees more and more sady, till they end in the almond-willow, or silver osier; will produce a very remarkable deception of the former kind; which deception will be encreased, if the nearer dark trees are proportionable and truly larger than those at the end of the avenue that are more sady.

To distance a building, plant as near as you can to it, two or three circles of different-coloured greens. Ever-greens are best for all such purposes. Suppose the outer one of holly, and the next of laurel, &c. the consequence will be that the imagination immediately allows a space betwixt these circles, and another betwixt the house and them; and as the

imagined space is indeterminate, if your building be dim coloured, it will not appear inconsiderable. The imagination is a greater magnifier than a microscopic glass. And on this head, I have known some instances, where, by shewing intermediate ground, the distance has appeared less, than while an hedge or grove concealed it.

Hedges, appearing as such, are universally bad. They discover art in nature's province.

Trees in hedges partake of their artificiality, and become a part of them. There is no more sudden and obvious improvement, than an hedge removed, and the trees remaining; yet not in such manner as to mark out the former hedge.

Water should ever appear as an irregular lake, or winding stream.

Islands give beauty, if the water be adequate; but lessen grandeur through variety.

It was the wise remark of some sagacious observer, That familiarity is, for the most part, productive of contempt. Graceless offspring of so amiable a parent! Unfortunate beings that we are, whose enjoyments must be either checked, or prove destructive of themselves. Our passions are permitted to sip a little pleasure; but are extinguished by indulgence, like a lamp overwhelmed with oil. Hence we neglect the beauty with which we have been intimate; nor would any addition it could receive, prove an equivalent for the advantage it derived from the first impression. Thus, negligent of graces that have the merit of reality, we too often prefer imaginary ones that have only the charm of novelty: and hence we may account, in general, for the preference of art to nature, in our old-fashioned gardens.

Art, indeed, is often requisite to collect and epitomize the beauties of nature; but should never be suffered to set her mark upon them: I mean, in regard to those articles that are of nature's province; the shaping of ground, the planting of trees, and the disposition of lakes and rivulets. Many more particulars will soon occur, which, however, she is allowed to regulate, somewhat clandestinely, upon the following account—Man is not capable of comprehending the universe at one survey. Had he faculties equal to this, he might well be censured for any minute regulations of his own. It were the same, as if, in his present

present situation, he strove to find amusement in contriving the fabric of an ant's nest, or the partitions of a bee-hive. But we are placed in the corner of a sphere; endued neither with organs, nor allowed a station, proper to give us an universal view; or to exhibit to us the variety, the orderly proportions, and dispositions of the system. We perceive many breaks and blemishes, several neglected and unvariegated places in the part; which, in the whole, would appear either imperceptible, or beautiful. And we might as rationally expect a snail to be satisfied with the beauty of our parterres, slopes, and terrasses; or an ant to prefer our buildings to her own orderly range of granaries; as that man shall be satisfied, without a single thought that he can improve the spot that falls to his share. But, though art be necessary for collecting nature's beauties, by what reason is she authorized to thwart and to oppose her? Why fantastically endeavour to humanize those vegetables, of which nature, discreet nature, thought it proper to make trees? Why endow the vegetable bird with wings, which nature has made momentarily dependent upon the soil? Here art seems very affectedly to make a display of that industry, which it is her glory to conceal. The stone which represents an asterisk, is valued only on account of it's natural production: nor do we view with pleasure the laboured carvings and futile diligence of Gothic artists. We view, with much more satisfaction, some plain Grecian fabric, where art, indeed, has been equally, but less visibly, industrious. It is thus we, indeed, admire the shining texture of the silk-worm; but we loath the puny author when she thinks proper to emerge, and to disgust us with the appearance of so vile a grub.

But this is merely true in regard to the particulars of nature's province; wherein art can only appear as the most abject vassal, and had, therefore, better not appear at all. The case is different where she has the direction of buildings, useful or ornamental: or, perhaps, claims as much honour from temples, as the deities to whom they are inscribed. Here then it is her interest to be seen as much as possible: and, though nature appear doubly beautiful by the contrast her structures furnish, it is not easy for her

to confer a benefit which nature, on her side, will not repay.

A rural scene, to me, is never perfect, without the addition of some kind of building: indeed I have known a scar of rock-work, in great measure, supply the deficiency.

In gardening, it is no small point to enforce either grandeur or beauty by surprize; for instance, by abrupt transition from their contraries—but to lay a stress upon surprize only; for example, on the surprize occasioned by an aha! without including any nobler purpose; is a symptom of bad taste, and a violent fondness for mere conceit.

Grandeur and beauty are so very opposite, that you often diminish the one as you increase the other. Variety is most a-kin to the latter, simplicity to the former.

Suppose a large hill varied by art with large patches of different-coloured clumps, scars of rock, chalk quarries, villages, or farm-houses; you will have, perhaps, a more beautiful scene, but much less grand than it was before.

In many instances, it is most eligible to compound your scene of beauty and grandeur—Suppose a magnificent swell arising out of a well-variegated valley; it would be disadvantageous to encrease it's beauty, by means destructive to it's magnificence.

There may possibly, but there seldom happened to be any occasion to fill up valleys, with trees or otherwise. It is for the most part the gardener's business to remove trees, or aught that fills up the low ground; and to give, as far as nature allows, an artificial eminence to the high.

The hedge-row apple-trees in Herefordshire afford a most beautiful scenery, at the time they are in blossom: but the prospect would be really grander, did it consist of simple foliage. For the same reason, a large oak (or beech) in autumn, is a grander object than the same in spring. The sprightly green is then obfuscated.

Smoothness and easy transitions are no small ingredients in the beautiful; abrupt and rectangular breaks have more of the nature of the sublime. Thus a tapering spire is, perhaps, a more beautiful object than a tower, which is grander.

Many of the different opinions relating

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ing to the preference to be given to seats, villas, &c. are owing to want of distinction betwixt the beautiful and the magnificent. Both the former and the latter please: but there are imaginations particularly adapted to the one, and to the other.

Mr. Addison thought an open, unclosed champaign country, formed the best landscape. Somewhat here is to be considered. Large unvariegated, simple objects, have the best pretensions to sublimity; a large mountain, whose sides are

unvaried with objects, is grander than one with infinite variety: but then it's beauty is proportionably less.

However, I think a plain space near the eye gives it a kind of liberty it loves: and then the picture, whether you chuse the grand or beautiful, should be held up at it's proper distance. Variety is the principal ingredient in beauty; and simplicity is essential to grandeur.

Offensive objects, at a proper distance, acquire even a degree of beauty: for instance, stubble fallow ground—

ESSAY XXIII.

ON POLITICS.

PERHAPS men of the most different sects and parties very frequently think the same; only vary in their phrase and language. At least, if one examines their first principles, which very often coincide, it were a point of prudence, as well as candour, to consider the rest as nothing more.

A courtier's dependent is a beggar's dog.

If national reflections are unjust, because there are good men in all nations, are not national wars upon much the same footing?

A government is inexcusable for employing foolish ministers; because they may examine a man's head, though they cannot his heart.

I fancy, the proper means of encreasing the love we bear our native country, is to reside some time in a foreign one.

The love of popularity seems little else than the love of being beloved; and is only blameable when a person aims at the affections of a people by means in appearance honest, but in their end pernicious and destructive.

There ought, no doubt, to be heroes in society as well as butchers; and who knows but the necessity of butchers (inflaming and stimulating the passions with animal food) might at first occasion the necessity of heroes? Butchers, I believe, were prior.

The whole mystery of a courtly behaviour seems included in the power of making general favours appear particular ones.

A man of remarkable genius may afford to pass by a piece of wit, if it happens to border on abuse. A little genius

is obliged to catch at every witticism indiscriminately.

Indolence is a kind of centripetal force.

It seems idle to rail at ambition merely because it is a boundless passion; or rather is not this circumstance an argument in it's favour? If one would be employed or amused through life, should we not make choice of a passion that will keep one long in play?

A sportsman of vivacity will make choice of that game which will prolong his diversion: a fox, that will support the chase till night, is better game than a rabbit, that will not afford him half an hour's entertainment.

The submission of Prince Hal to the civil magistrate that committed him, was more to his honour than all the conquests of Henry the Fifth in France.

The most animated social pleasure, that I can conceive, may be, perhaps, felt by a general after a successful engagement, or in it: I mean, by such commanders as have souls equal to their occupation. This, however, seems paradoxical, and requires some explanation.

Resistance to the reigning powers is justifiable, upon a conviction that their government is inconsistent with the good of the subject; that our interposition tends to establish better measures; and this without a probability of occasioning evils that may over-balance them. But these considerations must never be separated.

People are, perhaps, more vicious in towns, because they have fewer natural objects there, to employ their attention—

or

or admiration: likewise, because one vicious character tends to encourage and keep another in countenance. However it be, excluding accidental circumstances, I believe the largest cities are the most vicious of all others.

Laws are generally found to be nets of such a texture, as the little creep through, the great break through, and the middle-sized are alone entangled in.

Though I have no sort of inclination to vindicate the late rebellion, yet I am led by candour to make some distinction between the immorality of it's abettors, and the illegality of their offence. My Lord Hardwick, in his condemnation-speech, remarks, with great propriety, that the laws of all nations have adjudged rebellion to be the worst of crimes. And in regard to civil societies, I believe there are none but madmen will dispute it. But surely, with regard to conscience, erroneous judgments, and ill-grounded convictions, may render it some people's duty. Sin does not consist in any deviation from received opinion; it does not depend upon the understanding, but the will. Now, if it appears that a man's opinion has happened to misplace his duty; and this opinion has

not been owing to any vicious desire of indulging his appetites—in short, if his own reason, liable to err, have biased his will, rather than his will any way contributed to bias and deprave his reason, he will, perhaps, appear guilty before none beside an earthly tribunal.

A person's right to resist depends upon a conviction that the government is ill-managed; that others have more claim to manage it, or will administer it better: that he, by his resistance, can introduce a change to it's advantage, and this without any consequential evils that will bear proportion to the said advantage.

Whether this were not in appearance the case of Balmerino, I will not presume to say: how conceived, or from what delusion sprung. But as, I think, he was reputed an honest man, in other respects, one may guess his behaviour was rather owing to the misrepresentations of his reason, than to any depravity, perverseness, or dissingenuity of his will.

If a person ought heartily to stickle for any cause, it should be that of moderation. Moderation should be his party.

ESSAY XXIV.

EGOTISMS.

FROM MY OWN SENSATIONS.

I.

I Hate maritime expressions, similes, and allusions; my dislike, I suppose, proceeds from the unnaturalness of shipping, and the great share which art ever claims in that practice.

II.

I am thankful that my name is obnoxious to no pun.

III.

May I always have an heart superior, with œconomy suitable, to my fortune!

IV.

Inanimates, toys, utensils, seem to merit a kind of affection from us, when they have been our companions through various vicissitudes. I have often viewed my watch, standish, snuff-box, with this kind of tender regard; allotting them a degree of friendship, which there are some men who do not deserve:

'Midst many faithless only faithful found!

V.

I loved Mr. Somerville, because he knew so perfectly what belonged to the flocci-nauci-nihili-pilification of money

VI.

It is with me in regard to the earth itself, as it is in regard to those that walk upon it's surface. I love to pass by crowds, and to catch distant views of the country as I walk along; but I insensibly chuse to sit where I cannot see two yards before me.

VII.

I begin, too soon in life, to slight the world more than is consistent with making a figure in it. The *non est tanti* of Ovid grows upon me so fast that in a few years I shall have no passion.

VIII.

I am obliged to the person that speaks me fair to my face. I am only more obliged to the man who speaks well of me

me in my absence also. Should I be asked whether I chose to have a person speak well of me when absent or present, I should answer the latter; for were all men to do so, the former would be insignificant.

IX.

I feel an avarice of social pleasure, which produces only mortification. I never see a town or city in a map, but I figure to myself many agreeable persons in it, with whom I could wish to be acquainted.

X.

It is a miserable thing to be sensible of the value of one's time, and yet restrained by circumstances from making a proper use of it. One feels one's self somewhat in the situation of admiral Hosier.

XI.

It is a miserable thing to love where one hates; and yet it is not inconsistent.

XII.

The modern world considers it as a part of politeness, to drop the mention of kindred in all addresses to relations. There is no doubt, that it puts our approbation and esteem upon a less partial footing. I think, where I value a friend, I would not suffer my relation to be obliterated even to the twentieth generation: it serves to connect us closer. Wherever I disesteemed, I would abdicate my first cousin.

XIII.

Circumlocutory, philosophical obscenity, appears to me the most nauseous of all stuff: shall I say it takes away the spirit from it, and leaves you nothing but a *caput mortuum*? or shall I say, rather, it is a *Sit*—e in an envelope of fine gilt-paper, which only raises expectation? Could any be allowed to talk obscenely with a grace, it were downright country fellows, who use an unaffected language: but even among these, as they grow old, it partakes again of affectation.

XIV.

It is some loss of liberty to resolve on schemes before-hand.

XV.

There are a sort of people to whom one would allot good wives and perform good offices: but they are sometimes those, with whom one would by no means share one's time.

XVI.

I would have all men elevated to as

great an height, as they can discover a lustre to the naked eye.

XVII.

I am surely more inclined (of the two) to pretend a false disdain, than an unreal esteem.

XVIII.

Yet why repine? I have seen mansions on the verge of Wales that convert my farm-house into an Hampton court, and where they speak of a glazed window as a great piece of magnificence. All things figure by comparison.

XIX.

I do not so much want to avoid being cheated, as to afford the expence of being so: the generality of mankind being seldom in good-humour but whilst they are imposing upon you in some shape or other.

XX.

I cannot avoid comparing the ease and freedom I enjoy, to the ease of an old shoe; where a certain degree of shabbiness is joined with the convenience.

XXI.

Not Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Coptic, nor even the Chinese language, seems half so difficult to me, as the language of refusal.

XXII.

I actually dreamt that somebody told me I must not print my pieces separate. That certain stars would, if single, be hardly conspicuous; which, united in a narrow compass, form a very splendid constellation.

XXIII.

The ways of ballad-fingers, and the cries of halfpenny pamphlets, appeared so extremely humorous, from my lodgings in Fleet Street, that it gave me pain to observe them without a companion to partake. For, alas! laughter is by no means a solitary entertainment.

XXIV.

Had I a fortune of eight or ten thousand pounds a year, I would, methinks, make myself a neighbourhood. I would first build a village with a church, and people it with inhabitants of some branch of trade that was suitable to the country round. I would then, at proper distances, erect a number of genteel boxes of about a thousand pounds a-piece, and amuse myself with giving them all the advantages they could receive from taste. These would I people with a select number of well-chosen

friends,

friends, assigning to each annually the sum of two hundred pounds for life. The salary should be irrevocable, in order to give them independency. The house, of a more precarious tenure, that, in cases of ingratitude, I might introduce another inhabitant.—How plausible soever this may appear in speculation, perhaps, a very natural and lively novel might be founded upon the inconvenient consequences of it, when put in execution.

XXV.

I think, I have observed universally that the quarrels of friends in the latter part of life, are never truly reconciled. *Male facta gratia nequicquam coit. & rescinditur.* A wound in the friendship in young persons, as in the bark of young trees, may be so grown over, as to leave no scar. The case is very different in regard to old persons and old timber. The reason of this may be accountable from the decline of the social passions, and the prevalence of spleen, suspicion and rancour, towards the latter part of life.

XXVI.

There is nothing, to me, more irksome than to hear weak and servile people repeat with admiration every silly speech that falls from a mere person of rank and fortune. It is *crambe bis cocta*. The nonsense grows more nauseous through the medium of their admiration, and shews the venality of vulgar tempers, which can consider fortune as the goddess of wit.

XXVII.

What pleasure it is to pay one's debts! I remember to have heard Sir T. Lyttelton make the same observation. It seems to flow from a combination of circumstances, each of which is productive of pleasure. In the first place, it removes that uneasiness which a true spirit feels from dependence and obligation. It affords pleasure to the creditor, and therefore gratifies our social affection: it promotes that future confidence, which is so very interesting to an honest mind: it opens a prospect of being readily supplied with what we want on future occasions: it leaves a consciousness of our own virtue: and it is a measure we know to be right, both in point of justice and of sound econo-

my. Finally, it is a main support of simple reputation.

XXVIII.

It is a maxim with me (and I would recommend it to others also, upon the score of prudence) whenever I lose a person's friendship, who generally commences enemy, to engage a fresh friend in his place. And this may be best effected by bringing over some of one's enemies; by which means one is a gainer, having the same number of friends, at least, if not an enemy the less. Such a method of proceeding should, I think, be as regularly observed as the distribution of vacant ribbons, upon the death of knights of the garter.

XXIX.

It has been a maxim with me to admit of an easy reconciliation with a person, whose offence proceeded from no depravity of heart; but where I was convinced it did so, to forego, for my own sake, all opportunities of revenge: to forget the persons of my enemies as much as I was able, and to call to remembrance in their place, the more pleasing idea of my friends. I am convinced that I have derived no small share of happiness from this principle.

XXX.

I have been formerly so silly as to hope, that every servant I had might be made a friend: I am now convinced that the nature of servitude generally bears a contrary tendency. People's characters are to be chiefly collected from their education and place in life: birth itself does but little. King's in general are born with the same propensities as other men; but yet it is probable, from the licence and flattery that attends their education, that they will be more haughty, more luxurious, and more subjected to their passions, than any men beside. I question not but there are many attorneys born with open and honest hearts: but I know not one, that has had the least practice, who is not selfish, trickish, and dissingenuous. So it is the nature of servitude to discard all generous motives of obedience; and to point out no other than those sordid ones of interest and fear. There are, however some exceptions to this rule, which I know by my own experience.

ESSAY

ESSAY XXV.

ON DRESS.

I.
DRESS, like writing, should never appear the effect of too much study and application. On this account; I have seen parts of drefs, in themselves extremely beautiful, which at the same time subject the wearer to the character of sloppishness and affectation.

II.
A man's drefs in the former part of life should rather tend to set off his person, than to express riches, rank or dignity: in the latter, the reverse.

III.
Extreme elegance in liveries, I mean such as is express'd by the more languid colours, is altogether absurd. They ought to be rather gawdy than genteel; if for no other reason, yet for this, that elegance may more strongly distinguish the appearance of the gentleman.

IV.
It is a point out of doubt with me, that the ladies are most properly the judges of the men's drefs, and the men of that of the ladies.

V.
I think, till thirty, or with some a little longer, people should drefs in a way that is most likely to procure the love of the opposite sex.

VI.
There are many modes of drefs, which the world esteems handsome, which are by no means calculated to shew the human figure to advantage.

VII.
Love can be founded upon nature only; or the appearance of it. For this reason, however a peruke may tend to soften the human features, it can very seldom make amends for the mixture of artifice which it discovers.

VIII.
A rich drefs adds but little to the beauty of a person. It may possibly create a deference, but that is rather an enemy to love:

*Non bene conveniunt nec in una sede morantur
Majestas & amor.* OVID.

IX.
Simplicity can scarce be carried too far; provided it be not so singular as to

excite a degree of ridicule. The same caution may be requisite in regard to the value of your drefs: though splendor be not necessary, you must remove all appearance of poverty: the ladies being rarely enough sagacious to acknowledge beauty through the disguise of poverty. Indeed, I believe sometimes they mistake grandeur of drefs for beauty of person.

X.
A person's manner is never easy, whilst he feels a consciousness that he is fine. The country-fellow, considered in some lights, appears genteel; but it is not when he is drest on Sundays, with a large nosegay in his bosom. It is when he is reaping, making hay, or when he is hedging in his hurden frock. It is then he acts with ease, and thinks himself equal to his apparel.

XI.
When a man has run all lengths himself with regard to drefs, there is but one means remaining which can add to his appearance. And this consists in having recourse to the utmost plainness in his own apparel, and at the same time richly garnishing his footman or his horse. Let the servant appear as fine as ever you please, the world must always consider the master as his superior. And this is that peculiar excellence so much admired in the best painters as well as poets; Raphael as well as Virgil: where somewhat is left to be supplied by the spectator's and reader's imagination.

XII.
Methinks, apparel should be rich in the same proportion as it is gay: it otherwise carries the appearance of somewhat substantial: in other words, of a greater desire than ability to make a figure.

XIII.
Persons are oftentimes misled in regard to their choice of drefs, by attending to the beauty of colours, rather than selecting such colours as may encrease their own beauty.

XIV.
I cannot see why a person should be esteemed haughty, on account of his taste for fine cloaths, any more than one who discovers a fondness for birds,

F 2 flowers.

flowers, moths, or butterflies. Imagination influences both to seek amusement in glowing colours; only the former endeavours to give them a nearer relation to himself. It appears to me, that a person may love splendour without any degree of pride; which is never connected with this taste but when a person demands homage on account of the finery he exhibits. Then it ceases to be taste, and commences mere ambition. Yet the world is not enough candid to make this essential distinction.

XV.

The first instance an officer gives you of his courage, consists in wearing cloaths infinitely superior to his rank.

XVI.

Men of quality never appear more amiable than when their dress is plain. Their birth, rank, title, and its appendages, are at best invidious; and as they do not need the assistance of dress, so, by their disclaiming the advantage of it, they make their superiority sit more easy. It is otherwise with such as depend alone on personal merit; and it was from

hence, I presume, that Quin asserted he could not afford to go plain.

XVII.

There are certain shapes and physiognomies, of so entirely vulgar a cast, that they could scarce win respect even in the country, though they were embellished with a dress as tawdry as a pulpit-cloth.

XVIII.

A large retinue upon a small income, like a large cascade upon a small stream, tends to discover its tenuity.

XIX.

Why are perfumes so much decayed? When a person on his approach diffuses them, does he not revive the idea which the ancients ever entertained concerning the descent of superior beings, 'veiled in a cloud of fragrance?'

XX.

The lowest people are generally the first to find fault with shew or equipage; especially that of a person lately emerged from his obscurity. They never once consider that he is breaking the ice for themselves.

ESSAY XXVI.

ON WRITING AND BOOKS,

I.

FINE writing is generally the effect of spontaneous thoughts and a laboured style.

II.

Long sentences in a short composition are like large rooms in a little house.

III.

The world may be divided into people that read, people that write, people that think, and fox-hunters.

IV.

Instead of whining complaints concerning the imagined cruelty of their mistresses, if poets would address the same to their Muse, they would act more agreeably to nature and truth.

V.

Superficial writers, like the mole, often fancy themselves deep, when they are exceeding near the surface.

VI.

*Sumite materiam vestris, qui scribitis æquam
Fuitus.*

Authors often fail by printing their works on a demi-royal, that should

have appeared on ballad-paper, to make their performance appear laudable.

VII.

There is no word in the Latin language, that signifies a female friend. 'Amica' means a mistress; and perhaps there is no friendship betwixt the sexes wholly disunited from a degree of love.

VIII.

The chief advantage that ancient writers can boast over modern ones, seems owing to simplicity. Every noble truth and sentiment was expressed by the former in the natural manner; in word and phrase, simile, perspicuous, and incapable of improvement. What then remained for later writers but affectation, witticism, and conceit?

XI.

One can, now and then, reach an author's head when he stoops; and, induced by this circumstance, aspire to measure height with him.

X.

The national opinion of a book or treatise

treatise is not always right—'est ubi peccat.'—Milton's *Paradise Lost* is one instance. I mean, the cold reception it met with at first.

XI.

Perhaps, an acquaintance with men of genius is rather reputable than satisfactory. It is as unaccountable, as it is certain, that fancy heightens sensibility; sensibility strengthens passion; and passion makes people humourists.

Yet a person of genius is often expected to shew more discretion than another man; and this on account of that very vivacity, which is his greatest impediment. This happens for want of distinguishing betwixt the fanciful talents and the dry mathematical operations of the judgment, each of which indiscriminately give the denomination of a man of genius.

XII.

An actor never gained a reputation by acting a bad play, nor a musician by playing on a bad instrument.

XIII.

Poets seem to have fame, in lieu of most temporal advantages. They are too little formed for business, to be respected: too often feared or envied, to be beloved.

XIV.

Tully ever seemed an instance to me, how far a man devoid of courage may be a spirited writer.

XV.

One would rather be a stump of laurel than the stump of a church-yard yew-tree.

XVI.

'Degere more feræ.' Virg. Vanbrugh seems to have had this of Virgil in his eye, when he introduces Miss Hoyden envying the liberty of a greyhound bitch.

XVII.

There is a certain flimziness of poetry, which seems expedient in a song.

XVIII.

Dido, as well as Desdemona†, seems to have been a mighty admirer of strange achievements:

'Heu! quibus ille
'Jactatus fatis! quæ bella exauspata canebat!
'Si mihi non,' &c.

This may shew that Virgil, Shakespeare,

and Shaftesbury, agreed in the same opinion.

XIX.

It is often observed of wits, that they will lose their best friends for the sake of a joke. Candour may discover; that it is their greater degree of the love of fame, not the less degree of their benevolence, which is the cause.

XX.

People in high or in distinguished life ought to have a greater circumspection in regard to their most trivial actions. For instance, I saw Mr. Pope—and what was he doing when you saw him?—why, to the best of my memory, he was picking his nose.

XXI.

Even Joe Miller in his jests has an eye to poetical justice; generally gives the victory or turns the laugh on the side of merit. No small compliment to mankind!

XXII.

To say a person writes a good style, is originally as pedantic an expression as to say he plays a good fiddle.

XXIII.

The first line of Virgil seems to patter like an hail-storm—'*Tityre tu patula;*' &c.

XXIV.

The vanity and extreme self-love of the French is no where more observable than in their authors; and among these, in none more than Boileau; who, besides his rhodomontades, preserves every the most insipid reading in his notes, though he have removed it from the text for the sake of one ever so much better.

XXV.

The writer who gives us the best idea of what may be called the genteel in style and manner of writing, is, in my opinion, my Lord Shaftesbury. Then Mr. Addison and Dr. Swift.

A plain narrative of any remarkable fact, emphatically related, has a more striking effect without the author's comment.

XXVI.

Long periods and short seem analogous to Gothic and modern stair-cases: the former were of such a size as our heads and legs could barely command; the latter such, that they might command half a dozen.

* To lead the life of a beast.

† Lord Shaftesbury.

I think nothing truly poetic, at least no poetry worth composing, that does not strongly affect one's passion: and this is but slenderly effected by fables, allegories, and lies:

'*Incredulus qđi.*' Hor.

XXVII.

A preface very frequently contains such a piece of criticism, as tends to countenance and establish the peculiarities of the piece.

XXVIII.

I hate a style, as I do a garden, that is wholly flat and regular; that slides along like an eel, and never rises to what one can call an inequality.

XXIX.

It is obvious to discover that imperfections of one kind have a visible tendency to produce perfections of another. Mr. Pope's bodily disadvantages must incline him to a more laborious cultivation of his talent, without which he foresaw that he must have languished in obscurity. The advantages of person are a good deal essential to popularity in the grave world as well as the gay. Mr. Pope, by an unwearied application to poetry, became not only the favourite of the learned, but also of the ladies.

XXX.

Pope, I think, never once mentions Prior; though Prior speaks so handsomely of Pope in his *Alma*. One might imagine that the latter, indebted as he was to the former for such numberless beauties, should have readily repaid this poetical obligation. This can only be imputed to pride or party-cunning. In other words, to some modification of selfishness.

XXXI.

Virgil never mentions Horace, though indebted to him for two very well-natured compliments.

XXXII.

Pope seems to me the most correct writer since Virgil; the greatest genius only, since Dryden.

XXXIII.

No one was ever more fortunate than Mr. Pope in a judicious choice of his poetical subjects.

XXXIV.

Pope's talent lay remarkably in what one may naturally enough term the condensation of thoughts. I think, no other English poet ever brought so much

sense into the same number of lines with equal smoothness, ease, and poetical beauty. Let him who doubts of this peruse his *Essay on Man* with attention. Perhaps, this was a talent from which he could not easily have swerved: perhaps, he could not have sufficiently rarefied his thoughts to produce that sliminess which is required in a ballad or love-song. His *Monster of Ragusa* and his *Translations from Chaucer* have some little tendency to invalidate this observation.

XXXV.

I durst not have censured Mr. Pope's writings in his life-time, you say. True. A writer surrounded with all his fame, engaging with another that is hardly known, is a man in armour attacking another in his night-gown and slippers.

XXXVI.

Pope's religion is often found very advantageous to his descriptive talents, as it is no doubt embellished with the most pompous scenes and ostentatious imagery: for instance,

'When from the censer clouds of,' &c.

XXXVII.

Pope has made the utmost advantage of alliteration, regulating it by the pause with the utmost success:

'Die and endow a college or a cat,' &c. &c.

It is an easy kind of beauty. Dryden, seems to have borrowed it from Spenser.

XXXVIII.

Pope has published fewer foibles than any other poet that is equally voluminous.

XXXIX.

It is no doubt extremely possible to form an English prosody; but to a good ear it were almost superfluous, and to a bad one useless; this last being, I believe, never joined with a poetic genius. It may be joined with wit; it may be connected with sound judgment; but is surely never united with taste, which is the life and soul of poetry.

XL.

Rhymes, in elegant poetry, should consist of syllables that are long in pronunciation; such as 'are, ear, ire, ore, your;' in which a nice ear will find more agreeableness than in these 'gnat, net, knit, knot, nut.'

XLI.

There is a vast beauty (to me) in using a word of a particular nature in the eighth

eighth and ninth syllables of an English verse. I mean what is virtually a dactyl. For instance—

'And pikes, the tyrants of the watry plains.'
Let any person of an ear substitute 'li-
'quid,' instead of 'watry,' and he will
find the disadvantage. Mr. Pope (who
has improved our versification through
a judicious disposition of the pause)
seems not enough aware of this beauty.

XLII.

As to the frequent use of alliteration,
it has probably had it's day.

XLIII.

It has ever a good effect when the stress
of the thought is laid upon that word
which the voice most naturally pro-
nounces with an emphasis.

'I mane & versas tecum medi'ares,' &c. HOR.

'Quam vellent æthere in alto

'Nunc & pauperiem,' &c. VIRG.

'O fortunati, quorum jam mœnia,' &c. VIRG.

'At regina gravi jamdudum*,' &c. VIRG.

Virgil, whose very metre appears to af-
fect one's passions, was a master of this
secret.

XLIV.

There are numbers in the world, who
do not want sense, to make a figure; so
much as an opinion of their own abili-
ties, to put them upon recording their
observations, and allowing them the
same importance which they do to those
which others print.

XLV.

A good writer cannot with the utmost
study produce some thoughts, which
will flow from a bad one with ease and
precipitation. The reverse is also true.
A bad writer, &c.

XLVI.

'Great wits have short memories,' is
a proverb; and as such has undoubtedly
some foundation in nature. The case
seems to be, that men of genius forget
things of common concern, unimport-
ant facts and circumstances, which make
no slight impression in every-day minds.
But sure it will be found that all wit de-
pends on memory; i. e. on the recol-
lection of passages, either to illustrate or

contrast with any present occasion. It
is probably the fate of a common under-
standing to forget the very things which
the man of wit remembers. But an ob-
livion of those things which almost every
one remembers, renders his case the
more remarkable, and thus explains the
mystery.

XLVII.

Prudes allow no quarter to such la-
dies as have fallen a sacrifice to the gen-
tle passions; either because themselves,
being borne away by the malignant ones,
perhaps never felt the other so powerful
as to occasion them any difficulty; or
because no one has tempted them to
transgress that way themselves. It is
the same case with some critics, with re-
gard to the errors of ingenious writers.

XLVIII.

It seems with wit and good-nature,
'Utrum horum major accipere.' Taste
and good-nature are universally con-
nected.

XLIX.

Voiture's compliments to ladies are
honest on account of their excess.

L.

Poetry and consumptions are the most
flattering of diseases.

LI.

Every person insensibly fixes upon
some degree of refinement in his dis-
course, some measure of thought which
he thinks worth exhibiting. It is wise
to fix this pretty high, although it oc-
casions one to talk the less.

LII.

Some men use no other means to ac-
quire respect, than by insisting on it;
and it sometimes answers their purpose,
as it does an highwayman's in regard
to money.

LIII.

There is nothing exerts a genius so
much as writing plays: the reason is,
that the writer puts himself in the place
of every person that speaks.

LIV.

Perfect characters in a poem make
but little better figure than regular hills,
perpendicular trees, uniform rocks, and
level sheets of water, in the formation
of a landscape. The reason is, they are
not natural, and moreover want variety.

* Pope has given numberless instances of the beauties here pointed out by our author.
One of them will suffice, in this place, to illustrate the assertion.

When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labours, and the words move slow.

LV.

Trifles discover a character more than actions of importance. In regard to the former, a person is off his guard, and thinks it not material to use disguise. It is, to me, no imperfect hint towards the discovery of a man's character, to say he looks as though you might be certain of finding a pin upon his sleeve.

LVI.

A grammarian speaks of first and second person: a poet of Celia and Corydon: a mathematician of A and B: a lawyer of Nokes and Styles. The very quintessence of pedantry!

LVII.

Shakespeare makes his very bombast answer his purpose, by the persons he chuses to utter it.

LVIII.

A poet, till he arrives at thirty, can see no other good than a poetical reputation. About that æra, he begins to discover some other.

LVIX.

The plan of Spenser's Fairy Queen appears to me very imperfect. His imagination, though very extensive, is yet somewhat less so, perhaps, than is generally allowed; if one considers the facility of realizing and equipping forth the virtues and vices. His metre has some advantages, though, in many respects, exceptionable. His good-nature is visible through every part of his poem. His conjunction of the Pagan and Christian scheme (as he introduces the deities of both acting simultaneously) wholly inexcusable. Much art and judgment are discovered in parts, and but little in the whole. One may entertain some doubt whether the perusal of his monstrous descriptions be not as prejudicial to true taste, as it is advantageous to the extent of imagination. Spenser, to be sure, expands the last; but then he expands it beyond its due limits. After all, there are many favourite passages in his Fairy Queen, which will be instances of a great and cultivated genius misapplied.

LX.

A poet that fails in writing, becomes often a morose critic. The weak and insipid white-wine makes at length excellent vinegar.

LXI.

People of fortune, perhaps, covet the acquaintance of established writers, not

so much upon account of the social pleasure, as the credit of it: the former would induce them to chuse persons of less capacities, and tempers more conformable.

LXII.

Language is to the understanding what a genteel motion is to the body; a very great advantage. But a person may be superior to another in understanding, that has not an equal dignity of expression; and a man may boast an handsomer figure, that is inferior to another in regard to motion.

LXIII.

The words 'no more' have a singular pathos; reminding us at once of past pleasure and the future exclusion of it.

LXIV.

Every single observation that is published by a man of genius, be it ever so trivial, should be esteemed of importance; because he speaks from his own impressions: whereas common men publish common things, which they have perhaps gleaned from frivolous writers.

LXV.

It is providential that our affection diminishes in proportion as our friends power encreases. Affection is of less importance whenever a person can support himself. It is on this account that younger brothers are often beloved more than their elders; and that Benjamin is the favourite. We may trace the same law throughout the animal creation.

LXVI.

The time of life when fancy predominates, is youth; the season when judgment decides best, is age. Poets, therefore, are always, in respect of their disposition, younger than other persons: a circumstance that gives the latter part of their lives some inconsistency. The cool phlegmatic tribe discover it in the former.

LXVII.

One sometimes meets with instances of genteel abruptness in writers; but I wonder it is not used more frequently, as it has a prodigious effect upon the reader. For instance (after Falstaff's disappointment in serving Shallow at court)

'Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pounds.'

SHAKESPEARE.

When Pandulph commanded Philip of France to proceed no farther against England,

England, but to sheath the sword he had drawn at the Pope's own instigation :

' Now it had already cost Philip eighty thousand pound in preparations.'

After the detail of King John's abject submission to the Pope's legate :

' Now John was hated and despised before.'

But, perhaps, the strongest of all may be taken from the Scripture, (conclusion of a chapter in St. John)

' Now Barabbas was a robber.'

LXVIII.

A poet hurts himself by writing prose; as a race-horse hurts his motions by condescending to draw in a team.

LXIX.

The superior politeness of the French is in nothing more discernible than in the phrases used by them and us to express an affair being in agitation. The former says, ' Sur la tapis;' the latter, ' Upon the anvil.' Does it not shew also the sincerity and serious face with which we enter upon business, and the negligent and jaunty air with which they perform even the most important?

LXX.

There are two qualities adherent to the most ingenious authors; I do not mean without exception. A decent pride that will admit of no servility, and a sheepish bashfulness that keeps their worth concealed; the '*superbia queesita*' '*meritis*,' and the '*malus pudor*,' of Horace. The one will not suffer them to make advances to the great; the other disguises that merit for which the great would seek out them. Add to these the frequent indolence of speculative tempers.

LXXI.

A poetical genius seems the most elegant of youthful accomplishments; but it is entirely a youthful one. Flights of fancy, gaiety of behaviour, sprightliness of dress, and a blooming aspect, conspire very amicably to their mutual embellishment; but the poetic talent has no more to do with age, than it would avail his Grace of Canterbury to have a knack at country dances, or a genius for a catch.

LXXII.

The most obsequious Muses, like the

fondest and most willing courtezans, seldom leave us any reason to boast much of their favours.

LXXIII.

If you write an original piece, you wonder no one ever thought of the best of subjects before you; if a translation, of the best authors.

LXXIV.

The antient poets seem to value themselves greatly upon their power of perpetuating the fame of their contemporaries. Indeed the circumstance that has fixed their language, has been the only means of verifying some of their vain-glorious prophecies. Otherwise, the historians appear more equal to the task of conferring immortality. An history will live, though written ever so indifferently; and is generally less suspected, than the rhetoric of the muses.

LXXV.

I wonder authors do not discover how much more elegant it is to fix their name to the end of their preface, or any introductory address, than to the title-page. It is, perhaps, for the sake of an F.R.S. or an LL.D. at the end of it.

LXXVI.

It should seem, the many lies, discernible in books of travels, may be owing to accounts collected from improper people. Were one to give a character of the English, from what the vulgar act and believe, it would convey a strange idea of the English understanding.

LXXVII.

Might not the poem on the Seasons have been rendered more 'uni,' by giving out the design of nature in the beginning of winter, and afterwards considering all the varieties of season as means aiming at one end?

LXXVIII.

Critics must excuse me, if I compare them to certain animals called asses; who, by gnawing vines, originally taught the great advantage of pruning them.

LXXIX.

Every good poet includes a critic; the reverse will not hold.

LXXX.

We want a word to express the *Hofpes* or *Hospita* of the ancients; among them, perhaps, the most respectable of

* Missionaries clap a tail to every Indian nation that dislikes them.

all characters; yet with us translated 'Host,' which we apply also to an Inn-keeper. Neither have we any word to express *Amica*, as if he thought a woman always was somewhat more or less than a friend.

LXXXI.

I know not where any Latin author uses *Ignotos* otherwise than as 'obscure persons,' as the modern phrase implies, 'whom nobody knows; yet it is used differently on Mrs. L——'s monument.

LXXXII.

The philosopher, who considered the world as one vast animal, could esteem himself no other than a louse upon the back of it.

LXXXIII.

Orators and stage-coachmen, when the one wants arguments, and the other a coat of arms, adorn their cause and their coaches with rhetoric and flower-pots.

LXXXIV.

It is idle to be much assiduous in the perusal of inferior poetry. Homer, Virgil, and Horace, give the true taste in composition; and a person's own imagination should be able to supply the rest.

In the same manner, it is superfluous to pursue inferior degrees of fame. One truly splendid action, or one well-finished composition, includes more than all the results from more trivial performances. I mean this for persons who make fame their only motive.

Very few sentiments are proper to be put in a person's mouth, during the first attack of grief.

Every thing disgusts, but mere simplicity; the scriptural writers describe their heroes using only some such phrase as this: 'Alas! my brother!' 'O Ab-salom, my son! my son!' &c. The lamentation of Saul over Jonathan is more diffuse, but at the same time entirely simple.

Angling is literally described by Martial—

—*Tremula piscem deducere seta.*

From *lētum fœdus* seems to come the English phrase and custom of striking a bargain.

I like Ovid's Amours better than his Epistles. There seems a greater variety of natural thoughts: whereas, when one has read the subject of one of his epistles,

one foresees what it will produce in a writer of his imagination.

The plan of his Elegies, for the most part well designed. The answers of Sabinus, nothing.

Necessity may be the mother of lucrative invention; but is the death of poetical.

If a person suspects his phrase to be somewhat too familiar and abject, it were proper he should accustom himself to compose in blank verse; but let him be much upon his guard against Antient Pistol's phraseology.

Providence seems altogether impartial in the dispensation which bestows riches upon one and a contempt of riches upon another.

Respect is the general end for which riches, power, place, title, and fame, are implicitly desired. When one is possessed of the end, through any one of these means, is it not wholly unphilosophical to covet the remainder?

Lord Shaftesbury, in the genteel management of some familiar ideas, seems to have no equal. He discovers an eloignement from vulgar phrases much becoming a person of quality. His sketches should be studied, like those of Raphael. His Enquiry is one of the shortest and clearest systems of morality.

The question is, whether you distinguish me, because you have better sense than other people; or whether you seem to have better sense than other people, because you distinguish me.

One feels the same kind of disgust in reading Roman history, which one does in novels, or even epic poetry. We too easily foresee to whom the victory will fall. The hero, the knight-errant, and the Roman, are too seldom overcome.

The elegance and dignity of the Romans is in nothing more conspicuous than in their answers to ambassadors.

There is an important omission in most of our grammar-schools, through which what we read, either of fabulous or real history, leaves either faint or confused impressions. I mean the neglect of old geographic maps. Were maps of ancient Greece, Sicily, Italy, &c. in use there, the knowledge we there acquire would not want to be renewed afterwards, as is now generally the case.

A person of a pedantic turn will spend five years in translating, and contending for the beauties of a worse poem than he might write in five weeks himself. There

seen

seem to be authors who wish to sacrifice their whole character of genius to that of learning.

Boileau has endeavoured to prove, in one of his admirable satires, that man has no manner of pretence to prefer his faculties before those of the brute creation. Oldham has translated him: my Lord Rochester has imitated him: and even Mr. Pope declares—

That, reason raise o'er instinct how you can.
In this 'tis God directs; in that 'tis man.

Indeed, the Essay on Man abounds with illustrations of this maxim; and it is amazing to find how many plausible reasons may be urged to support it. It seems evident that our itch of reasoning, and spirit of curiosity, precludes more happiness than it can possibly advance. What numbers of diseases are entirely artificial things, far from the ability of a brute to contrive! We disrelish and deny ourselves cheap and natural gratifications, through speculative precisions and doubts about the future. We cannot discover the designs of our Creator. We should learn then of brutes to be easy under our ignorance, and happy in those objects that seem intended, obviously, for our happiness: not overlook the flowers of the garden, and foolishly perplex ourselves with the intricacies of the labyrinth.

I wish but two editions of all books whatsoever. One of the simple text, published by a society of able hands; another with the various readings, and remarks of the ablest commentators.

To endeavour, all one's days, to fortify our minds with learning and philosophy, is to spend so much in armour that one has nothing left to defend.

If one would think with philosophers, one must converse but little with the vulgar. These, by their very number, will force a person into a fondness for appearance, a love of money, a desire of power; and other plebeian passions; objects which they admire, because they have no share in, and have not learning to supply the place of experience.

Livy, the most elegant and principal of the Roman historians, was, perhaps, as superstitious as the most unlearned plebeian. We see, he never is destitute of appearances, accurately described and solemnly asserted, to support particular events by the interpolation of exploded

deities. The puerile attention to chickens feeding in a morning—And then a piece of gravity: *Parva sunt hæc, sed parva ista non contemnenda; majores nostri maximam hanc rem facerunt.*

It appears from the Roman historians, that the Romans had a particular veneration for the fortunate. Their epithet 'Felix' seems ever to imply a favourite of the gods. I am mistaken, or modern Rome has generally acted in an opposite manner. Numbers amongst them have been canonized upon the single merit of misfortunes.

How different appears ancient and modern dialogue, on account of superficial subjects upon which we now generally converse. Add to this, the ceremonial of modern times, and the number of titles with which some kings clog and encumber conversation.

The celebrated boldness of an eastern metaphor is, I believe, sometimes allowed it for the inconsiderable similitude it bears to it's subject.

The style of letters, perhaps, should not rise higher than the style of refined conversation.

Love-verses written without real passion, are often the most nauseous of all conceits. Those written from the heart will ever bring to mind that delightful season of youth, and poetry, and love.

Virgil gives one such excessive pleasure in his writings, beyond any other writer, by uniting the most perfect harmony of metre, with the most pleasing ideas or images:

Qualem virginem demissum pollice flam;

And

Argentum Parisios lapis ———

With a thousand better instances.

Nothing tends so much to produce drunkenness, or even madness, as the frequent use of parentheses in conversation.

Few greater images of impatience, than a general seeing his brave army overmatched and cut to pieces, and looking out continually to see his ally approach with forces to his assistance, See Shakespeare.

When my dear Percy, when my heart's dear

Harry,

Cast many a northward look to see his father
Bring up his powers—but he did look in vain;

ESSAY XXVII.

BOOKS, &c.

SIMILES, drawn from odd circumstances and effects strangely accidental, bear a near relation to false wit. The best instance of the kind is that celebrated line of Waller:

He grasp'd at love, and filled his hand with bays.

Virgil discovers less wit, and more taste, than any writer in the world. Some instances.

—*Longumque bibebat amorem.*

What Lucretius says of the *Edita doctrina sapientum templa*—The temples of philosophers—appears in no sense more applicable than to a snug and easy charriot:

Discipere unde queas alios, passimque videre Errare, atque viam palantes quaere vias.

i. e. From whence you may look down upon foot-passengers, see them wandering on each side you, and pick their way through the dirt:

—Seriously

From learning's tow'ring height to gaze around,

And see plebeian spirits range below,

There is a sort of masonry in poetry, wherein the pause represents the joints of building; which ought in every line and course to have their disposition varied.

The difference betwixt a witty writer and a writer of taste is chiefly this. The former is negligent what ideas he introduces, so he joins them surprisingly. The latter is principally careful what images he introduces, and studies simplicity rather than surprize in his manner of introduction.

It may in some measure account for the difference of taste in the reading of books, to consider the difference of our ears for music. One is not pleased without a perfect melody of style, be the sense what it will: another, of no ear for music, gives to sense it's full weight without any deduction on account of harshness.

Harmony of period and melody of style have greater weight than is general-

ly imagined in the judgement we pass upon writing and writers. As a proof of this, let us reflect, what texts of Scripture, what lines in poetry, or what periods we most remember and quote; either in verse or prose, and we shall find them to be only musical ones.

I wonder the ancient mythology never shews Apollo enamoured of Venus; considering the remarkable deference that wit has paid to beauty in all ages. The Orientals act more consonantly, when they suppose the nightingale enamoured of the rose; the most harmonious bird of the fairest and most delightful flower.

Hope is a flatterer: but the most upright of all parasites; for she frequents the poor man's hut as well as the palace of his superior.

What is termed humour in prose, I conceive, would be considered as burlesque in poetry: of which instances may be given.

Perhaps, burlesque may be divided into such as turns chiefly upon the thought, and such as depends more upon the expression; or we may add a third kind, consisting in thoughts ridiculously dressed in language much above or below their dignity.

The Splendid Shilling of Mr. Phillips, and the Hudibras of Butler, are the most obvious instances. Butler, however, depended much upon the ludicrous effect of his double rhimes. In other respects, to declare my own sentiments, he is rather a witty writer than a humorous one.

Scenes below verse, merely versified lay claim to a degree of humour.

Swift in poetry deserves a place somewhere betwixt Butler and Horace. He has the wit of the former, and the graceful negligence which we find in the latter's epistles and satires. I believe, few people discover less humour in Don Quixote than myself. For beside the general sameness of adventure, whereby it is easy to foresee what he will do on most occasions, it is not so easy to raise a laugh from the wild achievements of a madman. The natural passion in that case is pity, with some small portion of mirth

birth at most. Sancho's character is indeed comic; and, were it removed from the romance, would discover how little there was of humour in the character of Don Quixote.

It is a fine stroke of Cervantes, when Sancho, sick of his government, makes no answer to his comforters, but aims directly at his shoes and stockings.

ESSAY XXVIII.

OF MEN AND MANNERS.

THE arguments against pride drawn so frequently by our clergy from the general infirmity, circumstances, and catastrophe of our nature, are extremely trifling and insignificant. Man is not proud as a species, but as an individual; not as comparing himself with other beings, but with his fellow-creatures.

I have often thought that people draw many of their ideas of agreeableness, in regard to proportion, colour, &c. from their own persons.

It is happy enough that the same vices which impair one's fortune, frequently ruin our constitution, that the one may not survive the other.

Deference often shrinks and withers as much upon the approach of intimacy, as the sensitive plant does upon the touch of one's finger.

The word Folly is, perhaps, the prettiest word in the language. Amusement and Diversion are good well-meaning words: but Pastime is what never should be used but in a bad-sense: it is vile to say such a thing is agreeable, because it helps to pass the time away.

Dancing in the rough is one of the most natural expressions of joy, and coincides with jumping. When it is regulated, it is merely *cum ratione in-janire*.

A plain, downright, open-hearted fellow's conversation, is as insipid, says Sir Plume, as a play without a plot; it does not afford one the amusement of thinking.

The fortunate have many parasites: Hope is the only one that vouchsafes attendance upon the wretched and the beggar.

A man of genius mistaking his talent loses the advantage of being distinguished; a fool of being undistinguished.

Jealousy is the fear or apprehension of superiority: Envy our uneasiness under it.

What some people term Freedom is nothing else than a liberty of saying and doing disagreeable things. It is but carrying the notion a little higher, and it would require us to break and have a head broken reciprocally without offence.

I cannot see why people are ashamed to acknowledge their passion for popularity. The love of popularity is the love of being beloved.

The ridicule with which some people affect to triumph over their superiors, is as though the moon under an eclipse should pretend to laugh at the sun.

Zealous men are ever displaying to you the strength of their belief, while judicious men are shewing you the grounds of it.

I consider your very testy and quarrelsome people, in the same light as I do a loaded gun; which may by accident go off and kill one.

I am afraid humility to genius is as an extinguisher to a candle.

Many persons, when exalted, assume an insolent humility, who behaved before with an insolent haughtiness.

Men are sometimes accused of pride, merely because their accusers would be proud themselves if they were in their places.

XIX. Men

XIX.

Men of fine parts, they say, are often proud; I answer, dull people are seldom so, and both act upon an appearance of reason.

XX.

It was observed of a most accomplished lady, that she was withal so very modest, that one sometimes thought she neglected the praises of her wit, because she could depend on those of her beauty; at other times, that she slighted those of her beauty, knowing she might rely on those of her wit.

XXI.

The only difference betwixt wine and ale seems to be that of chemic and galenic medicines.

XXII.

It is the reduplication or accumulation of compliments, that gives them their agreeableness: I mean, when, seeming to wander from the subject, you return to it again with greater force. As a common instance: 'I wish it was capable of a precise demonstration how much I esteem, love, and honour you, beyond all the rich, the gay, the great, of this sublunary sphere: but I believe that both divines and laymen will agree that the sublimest and most valuable truths are oftentimes least capable of demonstration.'

XXIII.

It is a noble piece of policy that is used in some arbitrary governments, (but suitable to none other) to insinuate into the minds of the people, that their Great Duke knoweth all things.

XXIV.

In a heavy oppressive atmosphere, when the spirits sink too low, the best cordial is to read over all the letters of one's friends.

XXV.

Pride and modesty are sometimes found to unite together in the same character: and the mixture is as salutary as that of wine and water. The worst combination I know is that of avarice and pride; as the former naturally obstructs the good that pride eventually produces. What I mean is, expence.

XXVI.

A great many tunes, by a variety of circumrotatory flourishes, put one in mind of a lark's descent to the ground.

XXVII.

People frequently use this expression, 'I am inclined to think so and so;' not

considering that they are then speaking the most literal of all truths.

XXVIII.

The first part of a newspaper which an ill natured man examines, is, the list of bankrupts, and the bills of mortality.

XXIX.

The chief thing which induces men of sense to use airs of superiority, is the contemplation of coxcombs; that is, conceited fools; who would otherwise run away with the men of sense's privileges.

XXX.

To be entirely engrossed by antiquity, and as it were eaten up with rust, is a bad compliment to the present age.

XXXI.

Ask to borrow sixpence of the Muses, and they tell you, at present they are out of cash, but hereafter they will furnish you with five thousand pounds,

XXXII.

The argument against restraining our passions, because we shall not always have it in our power to gratify them, is much stronger for their restraint, than it is for their indulgence.

XXXIII.

Few men, that would cause respect and distance merely, can say any thing by which their end will be so effectually answered as by silence.

XXXIV.

There is nothing more universally commended than a fine day; the reason is, that people can commend it without envy.

XXXV.

One may, modestly enough, calculate one's appearance for respect upon the road, where respect and convenience so remarkably coincide.

XXXVI.

Although a man cannot procure himself a title at pleasure, he may vary the appellation he goes by, considerably, As, from Tom, to Mr. Thomas, to Mr. Musgrove, to Thomas Musgrove, Esquire. And this by a behaviour of reserve, or familiarity.

XXXVII.

For a man of genius to condescend in conversation with vulgar people, gives the sensation that a tall man feels on being forced to stoop in a low room.

XXXVIII.

There is nothing more universally prevalent than flattery. Persons, who discover

discover the flatterer, do not always disapprove him, because he imagines them considerable enough to deserve his applications. It is a tacit sort of compliment that he esteems them to be such as are worth his while to flatter:

'And when I tell him he hates flattery,
'He says he does, being then most flattered.'

SHAKESPEARE.

XXXIX.

A person has sometimes more public than private merit. Honorio and his family were mourning for their ancestor; but that of all the world was internal and sincere.

Your plain domestic people, who talk of their humility and home-felt satisfactions, will in the same breath discover how much they envy a shining character. How is this consistent?

'You are prejudiced,' says Pedanticus; 'I will not take your word, or your character of that man.'—'But the grounds of my prejudice are the source of my accusation.'

A proud man's intimates are generally more attached to him, than the man of merit and humility can pretend his to be. The reason is, the former pays a greater compliment in his condescension.

The situation of a king is so far from being miserable, as pedants term it; that, if a person have magnanimity, it is the happiest I know; as he has assuredly the most opportunities of distinguishing merit, and conferring obligations.

XL.

Contemtae dominus splendidiore rei.

A man, a gentleman, evidently appears more considerable by seeming to despise his fortune, than a citizen and mechanic by his endeavours to magnify it.

XLI.

What man of sense, for the benefit of coal-mines, would be plagued with colliers conversation!

XLII.

Modesty makes large amends for the pain it gives the persons who labour under it by the prejudice it affords every worthy person in their favour.

XLIII.

Third thoughts often coincide with the first, and are generally the best grounded. We first relish nature and the country; then artificial amusements, and the city; then become impatient to retire to the country again.

XLIV.

While we labour to subdue our passions, we should take care not to extinguish them. Subduing our passions, is disengaging ourselves from the world; to which, however, whilst we reside in it, we must always bear relation; and we may detach ourselves to such a degree as to pass an useless and insipid life, which we were not meant to do. Our existence here is at least one part of a system.

A man has generally the good or ill qualities which he attributes to mankind

XLV.

Anger and the thirst of revenge are a kind of fever. Fighting, and law-suits, bleeding; at least, an evacuation. The latter occasions a dissipation of money; the former of those fiery spirits which cause a preternatural fermentation.

XLVI.

Were a man of pleasure to arrive at the full extent of his several wishes; he must immediately feel himself miserable. It is one species of despair to have no room to hope for any addition to one's happiness.

His following wish must then be to wish he had some fresh object for his wishes. A strong argument that our minds and bodies were both meant to be for ever active.

XLVII.

I have seen one evil underneath the sun, which gives me particular mortification.

The reserve or shyness of men of sense generally confines them to a small acquaintance: and they find numbers their avowed enemies, the similarity of whose tastes, had fortune brought them once acquainted, would have rendered them their fondest friends.

XLVIII.

A mere relator of matters of fact, is fit only for an evidence in a court of justice.

XLIX.

If a man be of superior dignity to a woman, a woman is surely as much superior to a man that is effeminated. Lilly's rule in the grammar has well enough adjusted this subordination. 'The masculine is more worthy than the feminine, and the feminine more worthy than the neuter.'

L.

A gentleman of fortune will be often complaining of taxes; that his estate is inconsiderable; that he can never make

so much of it as the world is ready to imagine. A mere citizen, on the other hand, is always aiming to shew his riches; says, that he employs so many hands; he keeps his wife a chaise and one; and talks much of his Chinese ornaments at his paltry cake-house in the country. They both aim at praise, but of a very distinct kind. Now, supposing the Cit worth as much in money as the other is in land, the Gentleman surely chuses the better method of ostentation, who considers himself as superior to his fortune, than he who seems to look up at his fortune, and consequently sets himself beneath it.

LI.

The only kind of revenge which a man of sense need take upon a scoundrel, is, by a series of worthy behaviour, to force him to admire and esteem his enemy, and yet irritate his animosity, by declining a reconciliation. As Sir John Falstaff might say, 'turning even quarrels to commodity.'

LII.

It is possible, by means of glue, to connect two pieces of wood together; by a powerful cement, to join marble; by the mediation of a priest, to unite a man and woman; but of all associations, the most effectual is betwixt an idiot and a knave. They become in a manner incorporate. The former seems so framed to admire and idolize the latter, that the latter may seize and devour him as his proper prey.

LIII.

The same degree of penetration that shews you another in the wrong, shews him also, in respect to that instance, your inferior: hence the observation, and the real fact, that people of clear heads are what the world calls opinionated.

LIV.

There is none can baffle men of sense, but fools, on whom they can make no impression.

LV.

The regard one shews economy, is like that we shew an old aunt, who is to leave us something at last. Our behaviour on this account is as much constrained as that

'Of one well-stuffed in the sad ostent

'To please his gramam.'

SHAKESP.

LVI.

Fashion is a great restraint upon your persons of taste and fancy; who would otherwise, in the most trifling instances,

be able to distinguish themselves from the vulgar.

LVII.

A writer who pretends to polish the human understanding, may beg by the side of Rutter's chariot, who sells a powder for the teeth.

LVIII.

The difference there is betwixt honour and honesty, seems to be chiefly in the motive. The mere honest man does that from duty, which the man of honour does for the sake of character.

LIX.

The proverb ought to run—'A fool and his words are soon parted; a man of genius and his money.'

LX.

A man of wit, genius, learning, is apt to think it something hard, that men of no wit, no genius, no learning, should have a greater share of wealth and honours; not considering that their own accomplishment ought to be reckoned to them as their equivalent. It is no reason that a person worth five thousand pounds, should on that account have a claim to twenty.

LXI.

A wife ought in reality to love her husband above all the world; but this preference I think should, in point of politeness, be concealed. The reason is, that it is disgusting to see an amiable woman monopolized; and it is easy, by proper management, to wave (all I contend for) the appearance.

LXII.

There are some wounds given to reputation, that are like the wounds of an envenomed arrow: where we irritate and enlarge the orifice, while we extract the bearded weapon; yet cannot the cure be completed otherwise.

LXIII.

Amongst all the vain-glorious professors of humility, you find none that will not discover how much they envy a shining character; and this either by envying it themselves, or shewing a satisfaction in such as do. Now there is this advantage at least arising from ambition that it disposes one to disregard a thousand instances of middling grandeur; and reduces one's emulation to the narrow circle of a few that blaze. It is hence a convenient disposition in a country place, where one is encompassed with such as are merely richer, keep fine horses, a table, footmen; make a decent figure

figure as rural esquires; yet, after all, discover no more than an every-day plebeian character. Their a person of little ambition might envy; but another of a more extensive one may, in any kind of circumstances, disregard.

LXIV.

It is with some men as with some horses: what is esteemed spirit in them, proceeds, from fear. This was, undoubtedly, the source of that seeming spirit discovered by Tully, in regard to his antagonist M. Antony. He knew he must destroy him, or be destroyed himself.

LXV.

The same qualities, joined with virtue, often furnish out a great man, which, united with a different principle, furnish out an Highwayman; I mean, courage and strong passions. And they may both join in the same expression, though with a meaning somewhat varied.

Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim

Tollere humo.

i. e. Be promoted, or be hanged.*

LXVI.

True Honour is to honesty, what the court of Chancery is to common law.

LXVII.

Misery, as death approaches, are heaping up a chest of reasons to stand in more awe of him.

LXVIII.

A man sooner finds out his own foibles in a stranger, than any other foibles.

LXIX.

It is favourable enough on the side of learning, that if an historian mentions a good author, it does not seem absurd to stile him a great man: whereas the same phrase would not be allowed to a mere illiterate nobleman.

LXX.

It is less wonderful to see a wretched man commence an hero, than an happy one.

LXXI.

An high-spirit has often very different and even contrary effects. It sometimes operates no otherwise than like the *vis inertia*; at others, it induces men to baffle and make their part good among their superiors. As Mr. Pope says—

Some plunge in business, others shave their crowns.

It is by no means less forcible; when it withdraws a man from the company of those with whom he cannot converse on equal terms; it leads him into solitude, that, if he cannot appear their equal, he may at least conceal his inferiority. It is sullen, obstinate, disdainful, haughty, in no less a degree than the other; but is, perhaps, more genteel, and less citizen-like. Sometimes the other succeeds, and then it is esteemed preferable; but, in case it fail, it not only exposes a person's meanness, but his impatience under it; both of which the reserved spirit is able to disguise—but then it stands no chance of removing. *Pudor malus ulcera celat.*

LXXII.

Every single instance of a friend's insincerity encreases our dependence on the efficacy of money. It makes one covet what produces an external respect, when one is disappointed of that which is internal and sincere. This, perhaps, with decaying passions, contributes to render age covetous.

LXXIII.

When physicians write of diseases, the prognostics and the diagnostics, the symptoms and the paroxysms, they give one fatal apprehensions for every ache about us. When they come to treat of medicines and applications, you seem to have no other difficulty but to decide by which means you would recover. In short, to give the preference between a linist and an apozem.

LXXIV.

One should no more trust to the skill of most apothecaries, than one would ask the opinion of their pestle and mortar; yet both are useful in their way.

LXXV.

I believe there was never so reserved a solitary, but felt some degree of pleasure at the first glimpse of an human figure. The soul, however unconscious of its social bias in a crowd, will in solitude feel some attraction towards the first person that we meet.

LXXVI.

In courts, the motion of the body is easy, and those of the soul contrained: in the country, the gestures of the body are contrained, and those of the soul supine and careless.

LXXVII.

One may easily enough guard against
H ambition

ambition till five-and-twenty. It is not ambition's day.

LXXVIII.

It should seem that indolence itself would incline a person to be honest; as it requires infinitely greater pains and contrivance to be a knave.

LXXIX.

Perhaps rustics, boors, and esquires, make a principal figure in the country, as inanimates are always allowed to be the chief figures in a landskip.

LXXX.

Titles make a greater distinction than is almost tolerable to a British spirit. They almost vary the species; yet as they are oftentimes conferred, seem not so much the reward, as the substitutes of merit.

LXXXI.

What numbers live to the age of fifty or sixty years, yet, if estimated by their merit, are not worth the price of a chick, the moment it is hatched.

LXXXII.

A liar begins with making falsehood appear like truth, and ends with making truth itself appear like falsehood.

LXXXIII.

Fools are very often found united in the strictest intimacies, as the lighter kinds of woods are the most closely glued together.

LXXXIV.

Persons of great delicacy should know the certainty of the following truth. There are abundance of cases which occasion suspense, in which, whatever they determine, they will repent of their determination; and this through a propensity of human nature to fancy happiness in those schemes which it does not pursue.

LXXXV.

High-spirit in a man, is like a sword; which though worn to annoy his enemies, yet is often troublesome in a less degree to his friends. He can hardly wear it so inoffensively, but it is apt to incommode one or other of the company. It is more properly a loaded pistol, which accident alone may fire, and kill one.

LXXXVI.

A miser, if honest, can be only honest bare-weight.

Avarice is the most opposite of all characters to that of God Almighty, whose alone it is, to give and not receive.

A miser grows rich by seeming poor;

an extravagant man grows poor by seeming rich.

A grasshopper is, perhaps, the best device for coat-armour of those who would be thought aborigines; agreeable to the Athenian use of them.

Immoderate assurance is perfect licentiousness.

When a person is so far engaged in a dispute as to wish to get the victory, he ought ever to desist. The idea of conquest will so dazzle him, that it is hardly possible he should discern the truth.

I have sometimes thought the mind so calculated, that a small degree of force may impel it to a certain pitch of pleasure or of pain; beyond which it will not pass, by any impetus whatsoever.

I doubt whether it be not true, that we hate those faults most in others which we are guilty of ourselves.

A man of thorough sense scarce admires even any one; but he must be an idiot that is the admirer of a fool.

It may be prudent to give up the more trivial parts of character for the amusement of the invidious; as a man willingly relinquishes his silver to save his gold from an highwayman. Better be ridiculed for an untoward peruke, than be attacked on the score of morals, as one would be rather pulled by the hair than stabbed to the heart.

Virtue seems to be nothing more than a motion consonant to the system of things. Were a planet to fly from its orbit, it would represent a vicious man.

It is difficult not to be angry at beings we know incapable of acting otherwise than they do. One ought no more, if one reflects, to be angry at the stupidity of a man than of a horse, except it be vincible and voluntary; and yet the practice is otherwise.

People say, 'Do not regard what he says, now he is in liquor.' Perhaps it is the only time he ought to be regarded. *Aperit prae cordia Liber.*

Patience is the Panacea, but where does it grow, or who can swallow it?

Wits uniformly exclaim against fools, yet fools are their proper foil; and it is from them alone they can learn what figure themselves make. Their behaviour naturally falls in with the generality, and furnishes a better mirror than that of artful people, who are sure enough to deceive you either on the favourable or the ill-natured side.

We

We say, he is a man of sense who acknowledges the same truths that we do; that he is a man of taste who allows the same beauties. We consider him as a person of better sense and finer taste, who discerns more truths and more beauties in conjunction with ourselves: but we allow neither appellation to the man who differs from us.

We deal out our genuine esteem to our equals; our affection for those beneath us; and a reluctant sort of respect to those that are above us.

Glory relaxes often and debilitates the mind; censure stimulates and contracts—both to an extreme. Simple fame is, perhaps, the proper medium.

Persons of new families do well to make magnificent funerals, sumptuous weddings, remarkable entertainments; to exhibit a number of servants in rich and ostentatious liveries; and to take every public occasion of imprinting on the mob an habitual notion of their superiority. For so is deference obtained from that quarter:

Stupet in titulis & imaginibus.

One scarce sees how it is possible for a country girl or a country fellow to preserve their chastity. They have neither the philosophical pleasure of books, nor the luxurious pleasure of a table, nor the refined amusement of building, planting, drawing, or designing, to divert their imagination from an object to which they seem continually to stimulate it by provocative illusions. Add to this the health and vigour that are almost peculiar to them.

I am afraid there are many ladies who only exchange the pleasures of incontinence for the pleasure they derive from censure. At least it is no injustice to conclude so, where a person is extravagantly censorious.

Persons of judgment and understanding may be divided into two sorts. Those whose judgment is so extensive as to comprehend a great deal; existences, systems, universals: but as there are some eyes so constituted as to take in distant objects, yet be excelled by others in regard to objects minute or near, so there are other understandings better calculated for the examination of particular objects.

The mind is at first an open field without partitions or enclosures. To make it turn to most account, it is very

proper to divide and enclose. In other words, to sort our observations.

Some men are called sagacious, merely on account of their avarice: whereas a child can clench it's fist the moment it is born.

It is a point of prudence, when you converse with your inferior, to consider yourself as conversing with his inferior, with whom no doubt he may have the same connection that you have with him: and to be upon your guard accordingly.

How deplorable then is a person's condition, when his mind can only be supported by flattery, and his constitution but by cordials! when the relief of his present complaint undermines it's own efficacy, yet increases the occasion for which it is used! Short is then the duration of our tranquillity, or of our lives.

A man is not esteemed ill-natured for any excess of social affection; or an indiscreet profusion of his fortune upon his neighbours, companions, or friends; although the true measure of his affections is as much impaired by this; as by selfishness.

If any one's curse can effect damnation; it is not that of the pope, but that of the poor.

People of the finest and most lively genius have the greatest sensibility, of consequence the most lively passions; the violence of which puts their conduct upon a footing with that of fools. Fools discern the weaknesses which they have in common with themselves; but are not sensible of their excellencies; to which they have no pretensions; of course, always inclined to dispute the superiority.

Wit is the refractory pupil of judgment.

Virtue should be considered as a part of taste, (and perhaps it is so more in this age, than in any preceding one) and should as much avoid deceit or sinister meanings in discourse, as they would do puns, bad language, or false grammar.

Think, when you are enraged at any one, what would probably become your sentiments should he die during the dispute.

The man of a towering ambition, or a well regulated taste, has fewer objects to envy or to covet than the grovellers.

Refined sense, to a person that is to converse alone with bores, is a manifest

H 2 inconvenience.

inconvenience. As Falstaff says, (with some little variation)

Company, witty company, has been the ruin of me.

If envious people were universally to ask themselves, whether they would exchange their entire situations with the persons envied, (I mean their minds, passions, notions, as well as their persons, fortunes, dignities, &c. &c.) I will presume the self-love common to human nature would make them all prefer their own condition:

Quid statim? nolint—atque licet esse beatiss.

If this rule were applied, as it surely ought to be, it bids fair to prove an universal cure for envy:

*Quanto quisque sibi plura negaverit,
A Diis plura feret—Self-denial.*

A person, elevated one degree above the populace, assumes more airs of superiority than one that is raised ten. The reason is somewhat obvious. His superiority is more contestable.

The character of a decent, well-behaved gentleman-like man, seems more easily attainable by a person of no great part or passions, than by one of greater genius and more volatility. It is there no mismanagement, for the former to be chiefly ambitious of it. When a man's capacity does not enable him to entertain or animate the company, it is the best he can do to render himself inoffensive, and to keep his teeth clean. But the person who has talents for discourse, and a passionate desire to enliven conversation, ought to have many improprieties excused, which in the other were unpardonable. A lady of good-nature would forgive the blunder of a country esquire, who, through zeal to serve her with a glass of claret, should involve his spurs in her Brussels apron. On the contrary, the fop (who may in some sense use the words of Horace—

*Quod verum atque decens curo et rogo et
—omnis in hoc sum)*

would be entitled to no pardon for such unaccountable misconduct.

Man, in general, may be considered as a mechanic, and the formation of happiness as his business or employment: virtue, his repository or collection of instruments; the goods of fortune as his

materials: in proportion as the workman, the instruments, and the materials, excel, the work will be executed in the greater perfection.

The silly censorious are the very *fel natura*, 'the most bitter of all bitter things'; from the hyssop that grows upon the wall, to the satyr that pisses against it.

I have known a sensible man of opinion that one should not be solicitous about a wife's understanding. A woman's sense was with him a phrase to express a degree of knowledge, which was likely to contribute mighty little to a husband's happiness. I cannot be of his opinion. I am convinced, that as judgment is the portion of our sex, so fancy and imagination are more eminently the lot of theirs. If so, after honesty of heart, what is there we should so much require? A wife's beauty will soon decay, it is doubtful whether in reality first, or in our own opinion. Either of these is sufficient to pall the raptures of enjoyment. We are then to seek for something that will retain it's novelty; or, what is equivalent, will change it's shape when her person passes by it's identity. Fancy and genius bid fairest for this, which have as many shapes, as there can happen occasions to exert them. Good-nature, I always suppose. The former will be expedient to exhilarate and divert us; the latter to preserve our minds in a temper to be diverted.

I have known some attorney's of reputable families, and whose original dispositions seemed to have been open and humane. Yet can I scarce recollect one, in whom the gentleman, the Christian, and even the man, was not swallowed up in the lawyer: they are not only the greatest tyrants, but the greatest pedants of all mankind.

Reconciliation is the tenderest part either of friendship or of love; the latter more especially, in which the soul is more remarkably softened. Were a person to make use of art in procuring the affection of his mistress, it were, perhaps, his most effectual method to contrive a slight estrangement, and then, as it were imperceptibly, bring on a reconciliation. The soul here discovers a kind of elasticity; and, being forced back, returns with an additional violence.

Virtue may be considered as the only means

means of dispensing happiness in proper proportions to every moment of our time.

To judge whether one has sufficient pleasure to render the continuation of life agreeable, it is not enough to say, 'Would you die?' Take away first the hope of better scenes in this life, the fears of worse in another, and the bodily pain of dying.

The fear of death seems as natural as the sensation of lust or of hunger: the first and last, for the preservation of the individual; the other, for the continuation of the species.

It seems obvious that God, who created the world, intends the happiness and perfection of the system he created. To effect the happiness of the whole, self-love, in it's degree, is as requisite as social; for I am myself a part of that whole, as well as another. The difficulty of ascertaining what is virtue, lies in proportioning the degrees of self-love and social. *Proximus sum egamini—Tunica pallio propior.* 'Charity begins at home.' It is so. It ought to be so; nor is there any inconvenience arises to the public because it is general. Were this away, the individual must soon perish, and consequently the whole body. A man has every moment occasion to exert his self-love for the sake of self-preservation; consequently this ought to be stronger, in order to keep him upon his guard. A centinel's attention should be greater than that of a soldier on a review.

The social, though alike constant, is not equally intense; because the selfish, being universal, renders the social less essential to the well-being of one's neighbour. In short, the self-love and the social ought to bear such proportion as we find they generally do. If the selfish passion of the rest preponderate, it would be self-destructive in a few individuals to be over-socially disposed. If the social one prevails generally, to be of remarkable selfishness must obstruct the good of society.

Many feel a superfluous uneasiness for want of due attention to the following truth.

We are oftentimes in suspense betwixt the choice of different pursuits. We chuse one at last doubtfully, and with an unconquered hankering after the other. We find the scheme, which we have chosen, answer our expectation but in-

differently. Most worldly projects will. We, therefore, repent of our choice, and immediately fancy happiness in the paths which we decline and this heightens our uneasiness. We might at least escape the aggravation of it. It is not improbable we had been more unhappy, but extremely probable we had not been less so, had we made a different decision. This, however, relates to schemes that are neither virtuous nor vicious.

'Happy dogs,' says a certain splenetic, 'our footman and the populace!' 'Farewell,' says Esop, in Vanbrugh, 'whom I both envy and despise!' The servant meets with hundreds whose conversation can amuse him, for one that is the least qualified to be a companion for his master.

'A person cannot eat his cake and have it,' is, as Lord Shaftesbury observes, a proper answer to many splenetic people. But what imports it to be in the possession of a cake that you do not eat? 'If then the cake be made to be eaten,' says Lady L—, 'better eat it when you are most hungry.' Poor woman! she seems to have acted by this maxim, but yet could not avoid crying for the cake she had eaten.

You should calculate your appearance for the place where you reside. One would rather be a very Knight in the country than His honour Mr. Such-a-one.

The most consummate selfishness would incline a person, at his death, to dispose of his effects agreeably to duty; that he may secure an interest in the world to which he is going.

A justice and his clerk is now a little more than a blind man and his dog. The profound ignorance of the former, together with the canine impudence and rapacity of the latter, will but rarely be found wanting to vindicate the comparison. The principal part of the similitude will appear obvious to every one; I mean, that the justice is as much dependent on his clerk for superior insight and implicit guidance, as the blind fellow on his cur that leads him in a string. Add to this, that the offer of a crust will seduce the conductors of either to drag their masters into a kennel.

To remark the different figure made by different persons, under the same circumstances of fortune! Two friends of mine upon a journey had so contrived as to reduce their finances to a single sixpence

pence each. The one, with the genteel and liberal air of abundance, gave him to a black-shoe-boy, who wished his honour a thousand blessings; the other, having lodged a fortnight with a nobleman that was his patron, offered him to the butler, as an instance of his gratitude, who with difficulty forbore to curse him to his face.

A glass or two of wine extraordinary only raises a valetudinarian to that warmth of social affection, which had naturally been his lot in a better state of health.

Deference is the most complicate, the most indirect, and the most elegant of all compliments.

Be cautious not to consider a person as your superior, merely because he is your superior in the point of assurance. This has often depressed the spirit of a person of desert and diffidence.

A proper assurance, and competent fortune, are essential to liberty.

Taste is pursued at a less expence than fashion.

Our time in towns seems short to pass, and long to reflect upon; in the country, the reverse.

Deference, before company, is the gentlest kind of flattery. The flattery of epistles affects one less, as they cannot be shewn without an appearance of vanity. Flattery of the verbal kind is gross. In short, applause is of too coarse a nature to be swallowed in the gross, though the extract or tincture be ever so agreeable.

When a person, for a splendid servitude, foregoes an humble independency, it may be called an advancement, if you please; but it appears to mean an advancement from the pit to the gallery. Liberty is a more invigorating cordial than Tokay.

Though punctilios are trifling, they may be as important as the friendship of some persons that regard them. Indeed, it is almost an universal practice to rail at punctilio; and it seems in some measure a consequence of our attachment to French fashions. However, it is extremely obvious, that punctilio never caused half the quarrels that have risen from the freedom of behaviour, which is its opposite extreme. Were all men rational and civilized, the use of ceremony would be superfluous: but as the case is, it at least fixes some bounds to the encroachments of eccentric people,

who, under the denomination of freedom, might demand the privilege of breaking your head.

There seem near as many people that want passion as want reason.

The world would be more happy, if persons gave up more time to an intercourse of friendship. But money engrosses all our deference; and we scarce enjoy a social hour, because we think it unjustly stolen from the main business of our lives.

The state of man is not unlike that of a fish hooked by an angler. Death allows us a little line. We flounce, and sport, and vary our situation: but when we would extend our schemes we discover our confinement, checked and limited by a superior hand, who drags us from our element whenever he pleases.

The vulgar trace your faults; those you have in common with themselves: but they have no idea of your excellencies, to which they have no pretensions.

A person is something taller by holding up his head.

A man of sense can be adequately esteemed by none other than a man of sense: a fool by none but a fool. We ought to act upon this principle.

How melancholy is it to travel, late and fatigued, upon any ambitious project, on a winter's night; and observe the lights of cottages, where all the unambitious people are warm and happy, or at rest in their beds. 'Some of them,' says W—, 'as wretched as princes, for aught we know to the contrary.'

It is generally a principle of indolence that makes one so disgusted with an artful character. We hate the confinement of standing centinels in our own defence.

To behave with complaisance, where one foresees one must needs quarrel, is like eating before a vomit.

Some persons may with justice boast, that they knew as much as others when they were but ten years old: and that their present knowledge comprehends after the manner that a larger trunk contains the smaller ones it encloses.

It is possible to discover in some face the features Nature intended, had she not been somehow thwarted in her operations. Is it not easy to remark the same distortion in some minds? There is a phrase pretty frequent amongst the vulgar,

vulgar, and which they apply to absolute fools—That they have had a rock too much in their cradles. With me, it is a most expressive idiom to describe a dislocated understanding: an understanding, for instance, which like a watch discovers a multitude of such parts as appear obviously intended to belong to a system of the greatest perfection; yet which, by some unlucky jumble, falls infinitely short of it.

Is it not the wound our pride sustains by being deceived, that makes us more averse to hypocrites, than to the most audacious and barefaced villain? Yet it seems as much a piece of justice to commend a man for talking more honestly than he acts, as it is to blame a man for acting more dishonestly than he talks. The sum of the whole, however, is, that the one adds to other crimes by his deceit, and the other by his impudence.

A fool can neither eat, nor drink, nor stand, nor walk; nor, in short, laugh, nor cry, nor take snuff, like a man of sense. How obvious the distinction!

Independency may be found in comparative, as well as absolute, abundance: I mean where a person contracts his desires within the limits of his fortune.

There are very few persons who do not lose something of their esteem for you, upon your approach to familiarity.

The silly excuse that is often drawn from want of time to correspond, becomes no one besides a cobbler with ten or a dozen children dependent on a tatching end.

One, perhaps, ought to make funerals as sumptuous as possible, or as private: either by obscurity to elude, or by splendor to employ, the attention, that it may not be engaged by the most shocking circumstance of our humanity.

It happens a little unluckily, that the persons who have the most intimate contempt of money are the same that have the strongest appetites for the pleasures it procures.

We are apt to look for those virtues in the characters of noblemen, that are but rarely to be found any where, except in the preambles to their patents. Some shining exceptions may be made to this rule: in general we may consider their appearance with us in public, as one does our wearing apparel. 'Which

'lord do you wear to day?'—'Why I did think to wear my Lord * * * * ; but, as there will be little company in the Mall, I will e'en content myself to wear the same noble peer I wore yesterday.'

The worst inconvenience of a small fortune is, that it will not admit of inadvertency. Inadvertency, however, ought to be placed at the head of most men's yearly accounts, and a sum as regularly allotted to it as to any other article.

It is with our judgments, as with our eyes. Some can see objects at a greater distance more distinctly, at the same time less distinctly than others the objects that are near them.

Notwithstanding the airs men give themselves, I believe no one sees family to more advantage, than the persons that have no share in it.

How important is the eye to the appearance of an human face! the chief index of temper, understanding, health, and love! What prodigious influence must the same misfortunes have on some persons beyond others! as the loss of an eye to a mere insolent beauty, without the least philosophy to support herself.

The person least reserved in his censure of another's excess in equipage, is commonly the person who would exhibit the same if it had been within his power; the source of both being a disregard to decorum. Likewise he that violently arraigns or fondly indulges it, agree in considering it a little too seriously.

Amid the most mercenary ages, it is but a secondary sort of admiration that is bestowed upon magnificence.

An order of beauties, as of knights, with a style appropriated to them, (as, for instance, To the Right Beautiful Lady Such-a-one) would have as good a foundation as any other class, but would, at the same time, be the most invidious of any order that was ever instituted.

The first maxim a child is taught, is, that—

Learning is better than house and land; but how little is it's influence as he grows to maturity!

There is somewhat very astonishing in the record of our most celebrated victories: I mean, the small number of the conquerors killed in proportion to the conquered.

conquered. At Agincourt, it is said, were ten thousand, and fourteen thousand massacred. Livy's accounts of this sort are so astonishing, that one is apt to disbelieve the historian. All the explanation one can find, is, that the grois slaughter is made when one side takes to flight.

A person that is disposed to throw off all reserve before an inferior, should reflect, that he has also his inferiors, to whom he may be equally communicative.

It is impossible for a man of sense to guard against the mortification that may be given him by fools, or heteroclite characters; because he cannot foresee them. A wit would cannot afford to discard a frivolous conceit, though it tends to affront you: an old maid, a country put, or a college pedant, will ignorantly or wilfully blunder upon such hints as must discompose you.

A man that is solicitous about his health, or apprehensive of some acute disorder, should write a journal of his constitution, for the better instruction of his physician.

Ghosts have no more connection with darkness, than the mystery of a barber with that of a surgeon; yet we find they go together. Perhaps Nox and Chaos were their mythological parents.

He makes a lady but a poor recompence who marries her, because he has kept her company long after his affection is estranged. Does he not rather encrease the injury?

Second thoughts oftentimes are the very worst of all thoughts. First and third very often coincide. Indeed, second thoughts are too frequently formed by the love of novelty, of shewing

penetration, of distinguishing ourselves from the mob, and have consequently less of simplicity, and more of affectation. This, however, regards principally objects of taste and fancy. Third thoughts, at least, are here very proper mediators.

Set a beggar on horseback, and he'll ride, is a common proverb and a real truth. The *novus homo* is an *inexpertus homo*, and consequently must purchase finery before he knows the emptiness of it experimentally. The established gentleman disregards it, through habit and familiarity.

The soppery of love-verses, when a person is ill and indisposed, is perfect *ipeacacuanha*.

Antiquity of family, and distinctions of gentry, have, perhaps, less weight in this age, than they had ever heretofore: the bend dexter or sinister; the chief, the canton, or the cheveron, are greatly out of date. The heralds are at length discovered to have no legal authority. Spain, indeed, continues to preserve the distinction, and is poor. France (by their dispute about trading nobility) seems inclined to shake it off. Who now looks with veneration on the ante-diluvian pedigree of a Welchman? Property either is, or is sure to purchase distinction, let the king at arms, or the old maiden aunt, preach as long as either pleases. It is so; perhaps it ought to be so. All honours should lie open, all encouragement be allowed, to the members of trade in a trading nation: and as the nobility find it very expedient to partake of their profits, so they, in return, should obtain a share in the others honours. One would, however, wish the acquisition of learning was as sure a road to dignity as that of riches.

ESSAY XXIX.

OF BOOKS AND WRITERS.

IT is often asserted, by pretenders to singular penetration, that the assistance fancy is supposed to draw from wine, is merely imaginary and chimerical; that all which the poets have urged on this head is absolute rant and enthusiasm; and has no foundation in truth or nature. I am inclined to think otherwise. Judgment, I readily allow, derives no benefit from the noblest cordial. But persons of phlegmatic constitutions have

those excellencies often suppressed, of which their imagination is truly capable, by reason of a lentor, which wine may naturally remove. It raises low spirits to a pitch necessary for the exertion of fancy. It contutes the *how off tantis*, so frequently a maxim with speculative persons. It quickens that ambition, or that social bias, which makes a person wish to shine, or to please. Ask what tradition says of Mr. Addison's conversation. But

But instances in point of conversation come with every one's observance. Why, then, may it not be allowed to produce the same effects in writing?

The affected phrases I hate most, are those on which your half-wits found their reputation. Such as, Pretty trifler, Fair plaintive, Lovely architect, &c.

Doctor Young has a surprising knack of bringing thoughts from a distance, from their lurking-places, in a moment's time.

There is nothing so disagreeable in works of humour as an insipid, unsupported vivacity; the very husks of drollery; bottled small-beer; a man out-riding his horse; lewdness and impotence; a fiery actor in a phlegmatic scene; an illiterate and stupid preacher discoursing upon Urim and Thummim, and beating the pulpit-cushion in such a manner, as though he would make the dust and the truth fly out of it at once.

An editor, or a translator, collects the merits of different writers; and, forming all into a wreath, bestows it on his author's tomb. The thunder of Demosthenes, the weight of Tully, the judgment of Tacitus, the elegance of Livy, the sublimity of Homer, the majesty of Virgil, the wit of Ovid, the propriety of Horace, the accuracy of Terence, the brevity of Phædrus, and the poignancy of Juvenal, (with every name of note he can possibly recall to mind) are given to some antient scribbler, in whom affectation, and the love of novelty, dispose him to find out beauties.

Humour and Vanburgh against Wit and Congreve.

The vacant skull of a pedant generally furnishes out a throne and temple for vanity.

May not the custom of scraping when we bow, be derived from the ancient custom of throwing their shoes backwards, off their feet?

'A bird in the air shall carry the tale, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.' Such is also the present phrase—'A little bird told it me,' says nurse.

The preference which some give to Virgil before Homer, is often owing to complexion: some are more formed to enjoy the grand; and others, the beautiful. But as for invention and sublimity, the most shining qualities of imagination, there is surely no comparison between them. Yet I enjoy Virgil more.

Agreeable ideas rise, in proportion as they are drawn from inanimates, from vegetables, from animals, and from human creatures.

One reason why the sound is sometimes an echo to the sense, is, that the pleasantest objects have often the most harmonious names annexed to them.

A man of a merely argumentative cast will read poetry as prose; will only regard the quantum it contains of solid reasoning: just as a clown attacks a desert, considering it as so much victuals, and regardless of those lively or emblematical decorations which the cook, for many sleepless nights, has endeavoured to bestow upon it.

Notwithstanding all that Rousseau has advanced so very ingeniously upon plays and players, their profession is, like that of a painter, one of the imitative arts, whose means are pleasure, and whose end is virtue. They both alike, for a subsistence, submit themselves to public opinion: and the dishonour that has attended the last profession, seems not easily accountable.

As there are evidently words in English poetry that have all the force of a dactyle, and, if properly inserted, have no small beauty on that account, it seems absurd to contract, or print them otherwise than at length.

'The loose wall tottering o'er the trembling shade.' *Osirey's Day of Judgment.*

'Trembling' has also the force of a dactyle in a less degree—but cannot be written otherwise.

I have sometimes thought Virgil so remarkably musical, that were his lines read to a musician, wholly ignorant of the language, by a person of capacity to give each word its proper accent, he would not fail to distinguish in it all the graces of harmony.

I think, I can observe a peculiar beauty in the addition of a short syllable, at the end of a blank verse: I mean, however, in blank dialogue. In other poetry it is as sure to flatten; which may be discerned in Prior's translation of Callimachus, viz. 'The holy victim—Dictæan, hearst thou—Birth, Great Rheu—Inferior Reptile—' &c. &c. for the translation abounds with them; and is rendered by that means prosaic.

The case is only, prose being an imitation of common life, the nature of an ode requires that it should be lifted some degrees higher.

I

But

But in dialogue, the language ought never to leave nature the least out of sight; and especially where pity is to be produced, it appears to receive an advantage from the melancholy flow this syllable occasions. Let me produce a few instances from Otway's tragedy of the Unhappy Marriage; and, in order to form a judgment, let the reader substitute a word of equal import, but of a syllable less, in the place of the instances I produce. (Some instances are numberless, where they familiarize and give an ease to dialogue.)

—Sure my ill fate's upon me.

—Why was I not laid in my peaceful grave,
With my poor parents, and at rest as they
are?

—I never see you now—you have been kinder.

—Why was I made with all my sex's softness.
Yet want the cunning to conceal it's follies?
I'll see Castilio—tax him with his falsehood.

—Should you charge rough,
I should but weep, and answer you with sob-
bing.

—When thou art from me, every place is
desert.

—Surely Paradise is round me,
And every sense is full of thy perfection.
To hear thee speak might calm a madman's
frenzy,

'Till, by attention, he forgot his sorrows.

—'Till good men with him dead—or I of-
fend him.

—And hang upon you like a drowning
creature.

—Cropt this fair rose and rifled all its
sweetness.

—Give me Chamont, and let the world for-
sake me.

—I've drank an healing draught
For all my cares, and never more shall wrong
thee.

—When I'm laid low in the cold grave for-
gotten,
May you be happy in a fairer bride,
But none can ever love you like Monimia.

I should imagine, that, in some or most of these examples, a particular degree of tenderness is owing to the supernumerary syllable; yet it requires a nice ear for the disposition of it (for it must not be universal;) and, with this, may

• Dr. Lancaster being asked hastily his idea of this expression, answered, *Quakerly*.

expressive,

give at once an harmonious flow, a natural ease, an energy, tenderness, and variety to the language.

A man of dry sound judgment attends to the truth of the proposition—a man of ear and sensibility to the music of the versification. A man of a well regulated taste finds the former more deeply imprinted on him, by the judicious management of the latter.

It seems to me, that what are called notes at the bottom of pages (as well as parentheses in writing) might be generally avoided without injuring the thread of a discourse. It is true, it might require some address to interweave them gracefully into the text; but how much more agreeable would be the effect, than to interrupt the reader by such frequent avocation? How much more graceful, to play a tune upon one set of keys, with varied stops, than to seek the same variety, by an awkward motion from one set to another.

It bears a little hard upon our candour, that 'to take to pieces,' in our language, signifies the same as 'to expole;' and 'to expose,' has a signification, which good-nature can as little allow, as can the laws of etymology.

The ordinary letters from friend to friend seem capable of receiving a better turn, than mere compliment, frivolous intelligence, or professions of friendship continually repeated. The established maxim, to correspond with ease, has almost excluded every useful subject. But may not excess of negligence discover affectation, as well as it's opposite extreme? There are many degrees of intermediate solidity betwixt a Westphalia ham and a whipt syllabus.

I am astonished to remark the defect of ear which some tolerably harmonious poets discover in their Alexandrines. It seems wonderful, that an error so obvious, and so very disgusting to a nice ear, would occur so frequently as the following:

* What seraph e'er could preach
* So choice a lecture as his wondrous vā-
* tue's lore?

The pause being after the sixth syllable; it is plain the whole emphasis of pronunciation is thrown upon the particle *as*. It seems most amazing to me, that this should be so common a blunder.

Simplex munditiis * has been esteemed universally to be a phrase at once very

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expressive, and of very difficult interpretation: at least, not very capable to be explained without circumlocution. What objection can we make to that single word, 'elegant,' which excludes the glare and multiplicity of ornaments on one side, as much as it does dirt and rusticity on the other?

The French use the word 'naïve,' in such a sense as to be explained by no English word; unless we will submit to restrain ourselves in the application of the word 'sentimental.' It means the language of passion, or the heart, in opposition to the language of reflection and the head.

The most frequent mistake that is made, seems to be that of the means for the end: thus riches for happiness, and thus learning for sense. The former of these is hourly observable: and as to the latter, methinks, this age affords frequent and surprising instances.

It is with real concern, that I observe many persons of true poetical genius endeavouring to quench their native fire, that they may exhibit learning without a single spark of it. Nor is it uncommon to see an author translate a book, when

with half the pains he could write a better; but the translation favours more of learning; and gives room for notes, which exhibit more.

Learning, like money, may be of so base a coin, as to be utterly void of use; or, if sterling, may require good management, to make it serve the purposes of sense or happiness.

When a nobleman has once conferred any great favour on his inferior, he ought thenceforth to consider, that his requests, his advice, and even his intimations, become commands; and to propose matters with the utmost tenderness. The person whom he obliges has otherwise lost his freedom.

*Hæc ego si compellar imagine, cuncta resigno:
Nec somnum plebis laudo satur altitum; nec
Otia divitiis Arabum liberrima muso.*

The amiable and the severe Mr. Burke's sublime and beautiful, by different proportions, are mixed in every character. Accordingly, as either is predominant, men imprint the passions of love or fear. The best punch depends on a proper mixture of sugar and lemon.

ESSAY XXX.

ON MEN AND MANNERS.

THERE are many persons acquire to themselves a character of insincerity, from what is in truth mere inconstancy. And there are persons of warm, but changeable passions, perhaps the sincerest of any in the very instant they make profession, but the very least to be depended on through the short duration of all extremes. It has often puzzled me, on this account, to ascertain the character of Lady Luxborough*; yet whatever were her principles, I esteem Lord Bolingbroke's to have been the same. She seemed, in all respects, the female Lord Bolingbroke.

The principal, if not the only, difference betwixt honesty and honour, seems to lie in their different motives: the object of the latter being reputation; and of the former, duty.

It is the greatest comfort to the poor whose ignorance often inclines them to an ill-grounded envy, that the rich must die as well as themselves.

The common people call wit mirth; and fancy, folly; fanciful and foolish, they use indiscriminately. It seems to flow from hence, that they consider money as of more importance than the persons who possess it; and that no conduct is wise, beside what has a tendency to enrich us.

One should not destroy an insect, one should not quarrel with a dog, without a reason sufficient to vindicate one through all the courts of morality.

The trouble occasioned by want of a servant, is so much less than the plague of a bad one, as it is less painful to clean a pair of shoes than undergo an excess of anger.

The fund of sensible discourse is limited; that of jest and badinage is infinite. In many companies, then, where nothing is to be learnt, it were, perhaps, better to get upon the familiar footing: to give and take in the way of raillery.

When a wife or mistress lives as in a

* Sister to Lord Bolingbroke. With her the author had enjoyed a literary correspondence.

jail, the person that confines her lives the life of a jailor.

There seems some analogy betwixt a person's manner in every action of his life.

LadyLuxborough's hand-writing was at the same time delicate and masculine. Her features, her air, her understanding, her motions, and her sentiments, were the same. Mr. W—, in the same respects, delicate, but not masculine. Mr. G—, rather more delicate than masculine. Mr. J—, rather more masculine than delicate. And this, in regard to the three last, extends to their drawing, verification, &c. &c. &c.

Riches deserve the attention of young persons rather than old ones; though the practice is otherwise.

To consume one's time and fortune at once, without pleasure, recompence, or figure, is like pouring forth one's spirits rather in phlebotomy than enjoyment.

Parents are generally partial to great vivacity in their children, and are apt to be more or less fond of them in proportion to it. Perhaps, there cannot be a symptom less expressive of future judgment and solidity. It seems thoroughly to preclude not only depth of penetration, but also delicacy of sentiment. Neither does it seem any way consistent with a sensibility of pleasure, notwithstanding all external appearances. It is a mere greyhound puppy in a warren, that runs at all truths, and at all sorts of pleasure; but does not allow itself time to be successful in securing any. It is a busy bee whose whole time passes away in mere flight from flower to flower; without reflecting upon any a sufficient time to gather honey.

The queen of Sweden declared, She did not love men as men; but merely because they were not women. What a spirited piece of satire!

In mixed conversation, or amongst persons of no great knowledge, one indulges one's self in discourse that is neither ingenious nor significant. Vapid frivolous chit-chat serves to pass away the time. But corked up again in retirement, we recover our wonted strength, spirit and flavour.

The making presents to a lady one addresses, is like throwing armour into an enemy's camp, with a resolution to recover it.

He that lies a-bed all a summer's

morning, loses the chief pleasure of the day: he that gives up his youth to indolence, undergoes a loss of the same kind.

Spleen is often little else than obstructed perspiration.

The regard men externally profess for their superiors, is oftentimes rewarded—in the manner it deserves.

Methinks, all men should meet with a respect due to as high a character as they can act becomingly.

Shining characters are not always the most agreeable ones. The mild radiance of an emerald is by no means less pleasing than the glare of a ruby.

Mankind suffers more by the conflict of contrary passions, than that of passion and reason: yet, perhaps, the truest way to quench one passion is to kindle up another.

Prudent men should lock up their motives, giving only their intimates a key.

The country esquire limits his ambition to a pre-eminence in the knowledge of horses; that is, of an animal that may convey him with ease, credit, and safety, the little journeys he has to go. The philosopher directs his ambition to some well-grounded science, which may, with the same credit, ease, and safety, transport him through every stage of being; so that he may not be overthrown by passion, nor trailed insipidly along by apathy.

Tom Tweedle played a good fiddle; but, nothing satisfied with the inconsiderable appellation of a fiddler, dropped the practice, and is now no character.

The best time to frame an answer to the letters of a friend, is the moment you receive them. Then the warmth of friendship, and the intelligence received, most forcibly co-operate.

The philosophers and ancient sages, who declaimed against the vanity of all external advantages, seem in an equal degree to have countenanced and authorized the mental ones, or they would condemn their own example.

Superiority in wit is more frequently the cause of vanity than superiority of judgment; as the person that wears an ornamental sword is ever more vain than he that wears an useful one.

The person who has a superiority in wit, is enabled by the means of it to see his superiority: hence a deference expected,

rested, and offence taken upon the failure. Add to this, that wit, considered as fancy, renders all the passions more sensible; the love of fame more remarkably so; and you have some sort of reason for the revenge taken by wits upon those who neglect them.

In the quarrels of our friends, it is incumbent on us to take a part—in the quarrels of mere acquaintance, it is needless, and perhaps impertinent.

When I have purchased aught by way of mere amusement, your reflection upon the cost not only intimates the bargain I have made to be a bad one, but tends to make it so.

'Had I the money those paintings cost,' says Torpor, 'methinks I would have discovered some better method of disposing of it.'—'And in what would you have expended it?'—'I would buy some fine horses.'—'But you have already what answers your purpose!'—'Yes, but I have a particular fancy for a fine horse.'—'And have not I, who bought these pictures, the same argument on my side?' The truth is, he who extols his own amusement, and condemns another person's, unless he does it as they bear relation to virtue or vice, will at all times find himself at a loss for an argument.

People of real genius have strong passions; people of strong passions have great partialities; such as Mr. Pope for Lord Bolingbroke, &c. Persons of slow parts have languid passions, and persons of languid passions have little partiality. They neither love, nor hate, nor look, nor move, with the energy of a man of sense. The faults of the former should be balanced with their excellencies; and the blamelessness of the latter should be weighed with their insignificance. Happiness and virtue are, perhaps, generally dispensed with more equality than we are aware.

Extreme volatile and sprightly tempers seem inconsistent with any great enjoyment. There is too much time wasted in the mere transition from one object to another. No room for those deep impressions, which are made alone by the duration of an idea; and are quite requisite to any strong sensation, either of pleasure or of pain. The bee to collect honey, or the spider to gather poison, must abide some time upon the weed or flower. They whose fluids are mere vapour, seem rather cheerful than

happy men. The temper above described is oftener the lot of wits than of persons of great abilities.

There are no persons more solicitous about the preservation of rank, than those who have no rank at all. Observe the humours of a country christening; and you will find no court in Christendom so ceremonious as the quality of Brentford.

Critics will sometimes prefer the faulty state of a composition to the improved one, through mere perverseness: in like manner, some will extol a person's past conduct, to depreciate his present. These are some of the numerous shifts and machinations of envy.

Trees afford us the advantage of shade in summer, as well as fuel in winter; as the same virtue allays the fervour of intemperate passions in our youth, and serves to comfort and keep us warm amid the rigours of old age.

The term Indecision, in a man's character, implies an idea very nicely different from that of Irresolution; yet it has a tendency to produce it; and, like that, has often its original in excessive delicacy and refinement.

Persons of proud, yet abject spirits, will despise you for those distresses for which the generous mind will pity, and endeavour to befriend you.—A hint to whom only you should disclose, and from whom you should conceal them. Yet, perhaps, in general, it may be prudent to conceal them from persons of an opposite party.

The sacrificing of our anger to our interest is oftentimes no more than the exchange of a painful passion for a pleasurable.

There are not five in five hundred that pity, but, at the same time, also despise.—A reason that you should be cautious to whom and where you complain. The farthest a prudent man should proceed in general, is to laugh at some of his own foibles: when this may be a means of removing envy from the more important parts of his character.

Effeminacy of appearance, and an excessive attention to the minutest parts of dress, is, I believe, properly, in the general run, esteemed a symptom of irresolution. But, yet, instances are seen to abound in the French nation to the contrary. And in our own, that of Lord Mark Kerr was an instance equal to a thousand. A snuff-box hinge rendered invisible,

invisible, was an object on which his happiness appeared to turn; which however, might be clouded by a speck of dirt, or wounded by a hole in the heel of his stocking. Yet this man's intrepidity was shewn beyond all contradiction. What shall we say then of Mr. Gray, of manners very delicate, yet possessed of a poetical vein fraught with the noblest and sublimest images, and of a mind remarkably well stored with the more masculine parts of learning?—Here, perhaps, we must remain in suspense. For though taste does not imply manners, so neither does it preclude them: or what hinders, that a man should feel that same delicacy in regard to real honour, which he does in regard to dress?

If beneficence be not in a person's will, what imports it to mankind, that it is ever so much in his power? And yet we see how much more regard is generally paid to a worthless man of fortune, than to the most benevolent beggar that ever uttered an effectual blessing. It is all agreeable to Mr. Burke's thesis, that the formidable idea of power affects more deeply than the most beautiful image we can conceive of moral virtue.

A person that is not merely stupid, is naturally under the influence of the acute passions, or the slow. The principle of revenge is meant for the security of the individual; and supposing a person has not courage to put it immediately into practice, he commonly strives to make himself remarkable for the perseverance of his resentment. Both these have the same motive, to impress a dread upon our enemies of injuring us for the future: and though the world be more inclined to favour the rash than the phlegmatic enemy, it is hard to say which of the two has given rise to more dismal consequences. The reason of this partiality may be deduced from the same original, as the preference that is given to downright impudence before hypocrisy. To be cheated into an ill-placed esteem, or to be undermined by concealed malignity, discovers a contempt for our understanding, and lessens the idea we entertain of it ourselves. They hurt our pride more than open violence, or undisguised impudence.

King James the First, willing to involve the regal power in mystery, that, like natural objects, it might appear greater through the fog, declared it pre-

sumption for a subject to say, 'what a king might do in the fullness of his power.' This was absurd; but it seems presumption in a man of the world, to say what means a man of genius may think instrumental to his happiness. W—— used to say, it was presumption for him to make conjectures on the occasion. A person of refinement seems to have his pleasure distinct from the common run of men: what the world calls important, is to him wholly frivolous; and what the world esteems frivolous, seems essential to his tranquillity.

The apparatus of a funeral among the middle rank of people, and sometimes among the great, has one effect that is not frivolous. It in some measure dissipates and draws off the attention from the main object of concern. Weaker minds find a sort of relief in being compelled to give directions about the manner of interment: and the grave solemnity of the hearse, plumes, and escutcheons, though they add to the force of terror, diminish that of simple grief.

There are some people whom you cannot regard though they seem desirous to oblige you; nay, even though they do you actual services. This is the case wherever their sentiments are too widely different from your own. Thus a person truly avaricious can never make himself truly agreeable to one enamoured with the arts and sciences. A person of exquisite sensibility and tenderness can never be truly pleased with another of no feelings; who can see the most intimate of his friends or kindred expire without any greater pain than if he beheld a pitcher broken. These, properly speaking, can be said to feel nothing but the point of a sword; and one could more easily pardon them, if this apathy were the effect of philosophy, and not want of thought. But what I would inculcate is, with tempers thus different one should never attempt any close connection:

*Lupis & agnis quanta sortito obigit,
Tecum mihi discordia est.*

Yet it may be a point of prudence to shew them civility, and allow a toleration to their various propensities. To converse much with them would not only be painful, but tend to injure your own disposition; and to aim at obtaining their applause,

applause, would only make your character inconsistent.

There are some people who find a gloomy kind of pleasure in glouting, which could hardly be increased by the satisfaction of having their wishes granted. This is, seemingly, a bad character, and yet often connected with a sense of honour, of conscious merit, with warm gratitude, great sincerity, and many other valuable qualities.

There is a degree of understanding in women, with which one not only ought to be contented, but absolutely pleased. One would not, in them, require the unfathomable abyss.

The worst consequence of gratifying our passions, in regard to objects of an indifferent nature, is, that it causes them to proceed with greater violence towards other and other objects; and so *ad infinitum*. I wish, for my pocket, an elegant etui; and gold to remove the pain of wishing, and partake the pleasure of enjoyment. I would part with the purchase money, for which I have less regard; but the gratification of this wish would generate fifty others, that would be ruinous. See Epictetus; who, therefore, advises to resist the first.

Virtue and agreeableness are, I fear, too often separated; that is, externals affect and captivate the fancy, where internal worth is wanting to engage and attach one's reason—A most perplexing circumstance; and no where more remarkable, than when we see a wife man totally enslaved by the beauty of a person he despises.

I know not whether encreasing years, do not cause one to esteem fewer people, and to bear with more.

Quere, Whether friendship for the sex do not tend to lessen the sensual appetite; and *vice versa*.

I think, I never knew an instance of great quickness of parts being joined

with great solidity. The most rapid rivers are seldom or never deep.

To be at once a rake, and to glory in the character, discovers at the same time a bad disposition and a bad taste.

There are persons who slide insensibly into an habit of contradiction. Their first endeavour, upon hearing aught asserted, is to discover wherein it may be plausibly disputed. This, they imagine, gives an air of great sagacity; and if they can mingle a jest with contradiction, think they display great superiority. One should be cautious against the advances of this kind of propensity, which loses us friends, in a matter generally of no consequence.

The solicitude of peers to preserve, or to exalt their rank, is esteemed no other, than a manly and becoming ambition. The care of commoners, on the same subject, is deemed either vanity, formality, or pride.

An income for life only seems the best calculated for the circumstances and situation of mortal man: the farther property in an estate encreases the difficulty of disengaging our affections from this world, and of thinking in the manner we ought to think of a system from which we must be entirely separated.

‘I trust that sinking fund, my life.’

POPE.

Surprize quickens enjoyment, and expectation banishes surprize; this is the simple reason, why few pleasures; that have engrossed our attention previously, ever answer our ideas of them. Add to this, that imagination is a great magnifier, and causes the hopes we conceive to grow too large for their object. Thus expectation does not only destroy the advantage of surprize, and so flattens pleasure; but makes us hope for an imaginary addition, which gives the pain of disappointment.

ESSAY XXXI.

ON RELIGION.

PERHAPS, we should not pray to God ‘to keep us stedfast in any faith;’ but conditionally, that it be a right one.

When a tree is falling, I have seen the labourers, by a trivial jerk with a rope, throw it upon the spot where they would wish it should lie. Divines, un-

derstanding this text too literally, pretend, by a little interpolation in the article of death, to regulate a person's everlasting happiness. I fancy, the allusion will hardly countenance their presumption.

When misfortunes happen to such as dissent from us in matters of religion, we

we call them judgments: when to those of our own sect, we call them trials: when to persons neither way distinguished, we are content to impute them to the settled course of things.

In regard to church-music, if a man cannot be said to be merry or good-humoured when he is tickled till he laughs, why should he be esteemed devout or pious when he is tweedled into zeal by the drone-pipe of an organ? In answer to this it may be said, that if such an elevation of the spirits be not meritorious, be not devotion, yet it is attended with good consequences; as it leaves a good impression upon the mind, favourable to virtue and a religious life.

The rich man, adjoining to his country-seat, erects a chapel, as he pretends, to God Almighty, but, in truth, to his own vain-glory; furnishes it with luxurious conveniences, for prayers that will be never said. The poor man kneels by his bed-side, and goes to heaven before him.

I should think a clergyman might distinguish himself by composing a set of sermons upon the ordinary virtues extolled in classic writers, introducing the ornamental flourishes of Horace, Juvenal, &c.

1. Against family-pride, might be taken from Juvenal's *Stemmata quid faciunt*. Horace's *Non quia Mæneas*, and Marius's speech in Sallust. The text—'Is not this Joseph the carpenter's son?'

2. A sermon upon the advantages of competency, contentment, and rural life, might be abundantly embellished from the classics, and would be both grateful and serviceable to the common people: as the chief passion from which they suffer is envy, I believe, misplaced.

3. Another might be calculated for each season of the year; illustrating the wisdom, the power, and the benevolence of Providence. How idle to forego such fair and peaceable subjects, for the sake of widening the breach betwixt grace and works, predestination and election; solving the Revelations; or ascertaining the precise nature of Urim and Thummim!

It is a common argument amongst divines, in the behalf of a religious life, that a contrary behaviour has such consequences when we come to die. It is indeed true, but seems an argument of subordinate kind: the article of death

is more frequently of short duration. Is it not a stronger persuasive, that virtue makes us happy daily, and removes the fear of death from our lives antecedently, than that it smoothes the pillow of a death-bed?

It is a question whether the remaining superstitions among the vulgar of the English nation ought wholly to be removed: the notion of a ghost's appearance for the discovery of murder, or any flagrant act of injustice; that 'what is got over the devil's back will be spent under his belly—that 'cards are the devil's books,' &c.

If there be numbers of people that murder and devour their species; that have contradictory notions of beauty; that have deemed it meritorious to offer up human sacrifices; to leave their parents in deserts of wild beasts; to expose their offspring as soon as born, &c. &c. there should seem to be no universal moral sense; and of consequence, none.

It is not now, 'We have seen his star in the east;' but, 'We have seen the star on his breast, and are come to worship him.'

It is said, and I believe justly enough, that crimes appear less heinous to a person that is about committing them, than to his conscience afterwards. Is then the crime to be imputed to him in the degree he foresaw it, or in that he reflects upon it? Perhaps the one and the other may incline towards an extreme.

The word 'Religio,' amongst the Romans, and the word 'Church,' among the Christians, seem to have more interpretations than almost any other. '*Malus prociat ed religione moti.*' Livy, p. 1150. Vol. II. Here religion seems to mean prodigy—'*Si quis tale sacrum solenne duceret, nec se sine religione & piaculo id omittre posse.*' Livy, 1157. Here it seemingly means impiety: *Piaculum* being such an offence as required expiatory sacrifices.

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

Here it means superstition, as it does often in Lucretius.

The pope's wanton excommunications, his capricious pardon of sins, his enormous indulgences, and other particulars of like nature, shew that (whatever religions may practise cruelty) it is peculiarly the church that makes a jest of God Almighty.

The word Church has these different senses :

1. A set of people ordained to assist at divine service.
2. The members of a certain religious profession, including clergy and laity.
3. A large piece of building, dedicated to the service of God, and furnished with proper conveniences for those who meet to worship him.
4. A body of people, who too frequently harass and insult the laity according to law, and who conceal their real names under that of a spiritual court.

How ready have all nations been, after having allowed a proper portion of laud and praise to their own abilities, to attribute their success in war to the peculiar favour of a just Providence ! Perhaps this construction, as it is often applied, argues more of presumption than gratitude. In the first place, such is the partiality of the human heart, that, perhaps, two hostile nations may alike rely upon the justice of their cause ; and which of the two has the better claim to it, none but Providence can itself discover. In the next, it should be observed, that success by no means demonstrates justice. Again, we must not wholly forget to consider, that success may be no more than a means of destruction. And lastly, supposing success to be really and absolutely good, do we find that individuals are always favoured with it in proportion to their desert ; and if not individuals, why must we then suppose it to be the uniform recompence of society ?

It is often given as a reason why it is incumbent on God Almighty's justice to punish or reward societies in this world, because hereafter they cannot be punished or rewarded on account of their dissolution. It is indeed, true, that human vengeance must act frequently in the gross ; and whenever a government declares war against a foreign society, or finds it needful to chastise any part of it's own, must of necessity involve some innocent individuals with the guilty. But it does not appear so evident, that an omniscient and omnipotent Being, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and is able to make a distinction in his punishments, will

judge his unhappy creatures by these indiscriminate and imperfect laws.

Societies then are to be considered as the casual or arbitrary assortments of human institution. To suppose that God Almighty will, by means of punishments, often called judgments, destroy them promiscuously, is to suppose that he will regulate his government according to the cabals of human wisdom. I mean to be understood here, with regard to what are called judgments, or, in other words, præternatural interpositions of Providence. In a natural way, the constitution of the universe requires, that the good must often suffer with the bad part of society. But in regard to judgments upon whole bodies, (which we have days appointed to deprecate) let us introduce a case which may serve to illustrate the improbability.

Societies, I suppose then, are not divine, but human bundles.

Imagine a man to mix a large quantity of sand and gunpowder ; then parcel out the composition into different heaps, and apply fire to them separately. The fire, it is very obvious, would take no notice of the bundles ; would by no means consume, here and there, a bundle in the gross, but would affect that part of every portion that was combustible.

It may speciously enough be said, what greater injustice is it to punish a society promiscuously, than to involve an innocent son in the punishment due to a sinful father ? To this I answer, the natural system (which we need not doubt, upon the whole, is right) occasions both the good and bad to suffer many times indifferently. But they go much farther. They say God, as it were, interferes, in opposition to the settled course of things, to punish and include societies in one promiscuous vengeance. Were he to inflict extraordinary punishments distinct from those which sin entails upon us, he surely would not regulate them by mere human assortments, but would make the juster distinction of good and evil individuals.

Neither do I see, why it is so necessary, that societies, either here or hereafter, should be punished as societies. ' The soul that sinneth, it shall die.'

K

How

How happy may a lord bishop render a peasant at the hour of death, by bestowing on him his blessing, and giving him assurance of salvation? It is the same with regard to religious opinions in general. They may be confirmed and established to their hearts content, because they assent implicitly to the opinions of men who, they think, should know. A person of distinguished parts and learning has no such advantages; friendless, wavering, solitary, and, through his very situation, incapable of much assistance: if the rustic's tenor of behaviour approach nearer to the brutes, he also appears to approach nearer to their happiness.

You pray for happiness—Consider the situation or disposition of your mind at the time, and you will find it naturally tends to produce it.

In travelling, one contrives to allow day-light for the worst part of the road. But in life, how hard is it that every unhappiness seems united towards the close of our journey! Pain, fatigue, and want of spirits; when spirits are more immediately necessary to our support; of which nothing can supply the place beside religion and philosophy! But then the foundation must be laid in meditation and enquiry, at an unmolested season, when our faculties are strong and vigorous; or the tempest will most probably throw down the superstructure.

How is a man said to be guilty of incredulity? Are there not sizes of understandings adapted to the different sorts, and as it were sizes of narrations?

Conscience is adscititious; I mean influenced by conviction, which may be well or ill grounded; therefore no certain test of trust: but at most times a very faithful and a very prudent admonitor.

The attraction of bodies and social affection of minds seem in many respects analogous.

Attractions of either kind are less peripetuous, and less perceptible, thro' a variety of counter-attractions that diminish their effect. Were two persons to meet in Ispahan, though quite strangers to each other here, would they not go near to feel a kind of friendship, on the single score of their being Englishmen? Would they not pass a cheerful evening together over rice and sherbet? In like

manner, suppose two or three cotemporaries only meet on the surface of the globe, amid myriads of persons of all other ages whatsoever, would they not discover a mutual tenderness, even though they had been enemies when living? What then remains, but that we revive the memory of such relations now; in order to quicken our benevolence? That we are all countrymen, is a consideration that is more commonly inculcated, and limits our benevolence to a smaller number also. That we are cotemporaries, and persons whom future history shall unite; who, great part of us, however imperceptibly, receive and confer reciprocal benefits; this, with every other circumstance that tends to heighten our philanthropy, should be brought to mind as much as possible, during our abode upon earth. Hereafter it may be just, and requisite, to comprehend all ages of mankind.

The best notion we can conceive of God, may be, that he is to the creation what the soul is to the body:

—*Deus est quodcumque videt, ubicumque movetur.*

What is man, while we reflect upon a Deity, whose very words are works; and all whose works are wonders!

Prayer is not used to inform, for God is omniscient: not to move compassion, for God is without passions: not to shew our gratitude, for God knows our hearts. May not a man, that has true notions, be a pious man, though he be silent?

'To honour God, is to conceive right notions of him,' says some ancient that I have forgot.

I know not how Mr. Pope's assertion is consistent with the scheme of a particular Providence.

—The Almighty cause Acts not by partial, but by general laws.

What one understands by a general Providence, is that attention of the Almighty to the works of his creation, by which they pursue their original course, without deviating into such eccentric motions as must immediately tend to the destruction of it. Thus a philosopher is enabled to foretell eclipses with precision;

tion; and a stone thrown upward drops uniformly to the ground. Thus an injury awakes resentment; and a good office endears to us our benefactor. And it seems no unworthy idea of Omnipotence, perhaps, to suppose he at first constituted a system, that stood in no need either of his counteracting or suspending the first laws of motion.

But, after all, the mind remains;

and can we shew it to be either impossible, or improbable, that God directs the will? Now whether the divine Being occasions a ruin to fall miraculously, or in direct opposition to the ordinary laws of nature, upon the head of Chartres; or whether he inclines Chartres to go near a wall whose centre of gravity is unsupported, make no material difference.

ESSAY XXXII.

ON TASTE.

I Believe that, generally speaking, persons eminent in one branch of taste, have the principles of the rest; and to try this, I have often solicited a stranger to hum a tune, and have seldom failed of success. This, however, does not extend to talents beyond the sphere of taste; and Handel was evidently wrong, when he fancied himself born to command a troop of horse.

Mankind, in general, may be divided into persons of understanding and persons of genius; each of which will admit of many subordinate degrees. By persons of understanding, I mean persons of sound judgment; formed for mathematical deductions and clear argumentations. By persons of genius, I would characterize those in whom true and genuine fancy predominates; and this whether assisted or not by cultivation.

I have thought that genius and judgment may, in some respects be represented by a liquid and a solid. The former is, generally speaking, remarkable for it's sensibility, but then loses it's impression soon: the latter is less susceptible of impression, but retains it longer.

Dividing the world into an hundred parts, I am apt to believe the calculation might be thus adjusted.

Pedants	-	-	-	-	15
Persons of common sense	-	-	-	-	40
Wits	-	-	-	-	15
Fools	-	-	-	-	15
Persons of a wild uncultivated taste	-	-	-	-	10
Persons of original taste, improved by art	-	-	-	-	5

There is hardly any thing so uncommon as a true native taste improved by education.

The object of taste is corporeal beauty; for though there is manifestly a *decorum*; a *pulchrum*, an *honestum*, and *decorum*, in moral actions; and although a man of taste that is not virtuous commits a greater violence upon his sentiments than any other person; yet, in the ordinary course of speaking, a person is not termed a man of taste, merely because he is a man of virtue.

All beauty may be divided into absolute and relative, and what is compounded of both.

It is not uncommon to hear a modern Quixote insist upon the superiority of his idol or Dulcinea; and, not content to pay his own tribute of adoration, demand that of others in favour of her accomplishments. Those of grave and sober sense cannot avoid wondering at a difference of opinions, which are in truth supported by no criterion.

Every one, therefore, ought to fix some measure of beauty, before he grows eloquent upon the subject.

Every thing seems to derive it's pretensions to beauty, on account of it's colour, smoothness, variety, uniformity, partial resemblance to something else, proportion, or suitableness to the end proposed, some connection of ideas, or a mixture of all these.

As to the beauty of colours, their present effect seems in proportion to their impulse; and scarlet, were it not for habit, would affect an Indian before all other colours.

Resemblances wrought by art; pictures, busts, statues, please.

Columns, proportioned to their incumbent weight; but herein we suppose homogeneous materials; it is otherwise, in case we know that a column is made of iron.

Habit, herein, seems to have an influence to which we can affix no bounds. Suppose the generality of mankind formed with a mouth from ear to ear, and that it were requisite in point of respiration, would not the present make of mouths have subjected a man to the name of *Bocha chica*?

It is probable, that a clown would require more colour in his *Chloe's* face, than a courtier.

We may see daily the strange effects of habit, in respect of fashion. To what colours, or proportions, does it not reconcile us!

Conceit is false taste; and very widely different from no taste at all.

Beauty of person should, perhaps, be estimated according to the proportion it bears to such a make and features as are most likely to produce the love of the opposite sex. The look of dignity, the look of wisdom, the look of delicacy and refinement, seem in some measure foreign. Perhaps, the appearance of sensibility may be one ingredient; and that of health another. At least, a cadaverous countenance is the most disgusting in the world.

I know not, if one reason of the different opinions concerning beauty be not owing to self-love. People are apt to form some criterion from their own persons, or possessions. A tall person approves the look of a folio or octavo: a square thick-set man is more delighted with a quarto. This instance, at least, may serve to explain what I intend.

I believe, it sometimes happens that a person may have what the artists call an ear and an eye, without taste: for instance, a man may sometimes have a quickness in distinguishing the similitude or difference of lines and sounds, without any skill to give the proper preference betwixt the combinations of them.

Taste produces different effects upon different complexions. It consists, as I have often observed, in the appetite and the discernment; then most properly so

called, when they are united in equal proportions.

Where the discernment is predominant, a person is pleased with fewer objects, and requires perfection in what he sees. Where the appetite prevails, he is so much attached to beauty, that he feels a gratification in every degree in which it is manifested. I frankly own myself to be of this latter class: I love painting and statuary so well, as to be not undelighted with moderate performances.

The reason people vary in their opinions of a portrait, I mean with regard to the resemblance it bears to the original, seems no other than that they lay stress on different features in the original; and this different stress is owing to different complexions of mind.

People of little or no taste commend a person for it's corpulency. I cannot see why an excrescence of belly, cheek, or chin, should be deemed more beautiful than a wen on any other part of the body. Through a connection of ideas, it may form the beauty of a pig or an ox.

There seems a pretty exact analogy between the objects and the senses. Some tunes, some tastes, some visible objects, please at first, and that only; others only by degrees, and then long—(Raspberry-jelly—Green-tea—Alley-Croaker—Air in *Ariadne*—a Baron's Robe—and a Bishop's Lawn.) Perhaps, some of these instances may be ill enough chosen; but the thing is true.

Tunes with words, please me the more in proportion as they approach nearer to the natural accent of the words to which they are assigned. Scotch tunes often end high; their language does the same.

To how very great a degree the appearance of health alone is beauty, I am not able to determine. I presume, the most regular and well-proportioned form of limbs and features, is at the same time the most healthful one; the fittest to perform the functions and operations of the body. If so, a perfectly healthful form is a perfectly beautiful form—Health is beauty, and the most perfect health is the most perfect beauty. To have recourse to experience: the most sickly and cadaverous countenance is the least provocative to love; or rather the most inconsistent with it. A florid look, to ap-

pear beautiful, must be the bloom of health, and not the glow of a fever.

An obvious connection may be traced betwixt moral and physical beauty; the love of symmetry and the love of virtue; an elegant taste and perfect honesty. We may, we must, rise from the love of natural to that of moral beauty: such is the conclusion of Plato, and of my Lord Shaftesbury.

Wherever there is a want of taste, we generally observe a love of money, and cunning; and whenever taste prevails, a want of prudence, and an utter disregard to money.

Taste (or a just relish of beauty) seems to distinguish us from the brute creation, as much as intellect, or reason. We do not find that brutes have any sensation of this sort. A bull is goaded by the love of sex in general, without the least appearance of any distinction in favour of the more beautiful individual. Accordingly, men devoid of taste are in a great measure indifferent as to make, complexion, feature; and find a difference of sex sufficient to excite their passion in all its fervour. It is not thus where there is a taste for beauty, either accurate or erroneous. The person of a good taste requires real beauty in the object of his passion; and the person of bad taste requires something which he substitutes in the place of beauty.

Persons of taste, it has been asserted, are also the best qualified to distinguish, and the most prone to admire moral virtue: nor does it invalidate this maxim, that their practice does not correspond. The power of acting virtuously depends in a great measure upon withstanding a present, and perhaps sensual, gratification, for the sake of a more distant and intellectual satisfaction. Now, as persons of fine taste are men of the strongest sensual appetites, it happens that in balancing present and future, they are apt enough to allow an unreasonable advantage to the former. On the other hand, a more phlegmatic character may, with no greater self-denial, allow the future fairer play. But let us wave the merely

sensual indulgences; and let us consider the man of taste in regard to points of meum and tuum; in regard to the virtues of forgiveness; in regard to charity, compassion, munificence, and magnanimity; and we cannot fail to vote his taste the glorious triumph which it deserves.

There is a kind of counter-taste, founded on surprize and curiosity, which maintains a sort of rivalry with the true; and may be expressed by the name *Concetto*. Such is the fondness of some persons for a knife-haft made from the royal oak, or a tobacco-stopper from a mulberry-tree of Shakespeare's own planting. It gratifies an empty curiosity. Such is the casual resemblance of Apollo and the nine Muses in a piece of agate; a dog expressed in feathers, or a wood-cock in mohair. They serve to give surprize. But a just fancy will no more esteem a picture because it proves to be produced by shells, than a writer would prefer a pen because a person made it with his toes. In all such cases, difficulty should not be allowed to give a casting weight; nor a needle be considered as a painter's instrument, when he is so much better furnished with a pencil.

Perhaps no print, or even painting, is capable of producing a figure answerable to the idea which poetry or history has given us of great men: a Cicero, for instance, an Homer, a Cato, or an Alexander. The same, perhaps, is true of the grandeur of some antient buildings—And the reason is, that the effects of a pencil are distinct and limited, whereas the descriptions of the pen leave the imagination room to expatiate; and Burke has made it extremely obvious, that indistinctness of out-line is one source of the sublime.

What an absurdity is it, in the framing even prints, to suffer a margin of white paper to appear beyond the ground; destroying half the relieve the lights are intended to produce! Frames ought to contrast with paintings; or to appear as distinct as possible: for which reason, frames of wood inlaid, or otherwise va-

* Cornelius Ketel, born at Gonda in 1548; landed in England 1573; settled at Amsterdam 1581; took it into his head to grow famous by painting with his fingers instead of pencils. The whim took—His success increased—His fingers appearing too easy tools, he then undertook to paint with his feet. See H. Walpole's *Book of Painters*.

tinged with colours, are less suitable than gilt ones, which, exhibiting an appearance of metal, afford the best contrast with colour.

The peculiar expression in some portraits is owing to the greater or less manifestation of the soul in some of the features.

There is, perhaps, a sublime, and a beautiful, in the very make of a face, exclusive of any particular expression of the soul; or, at least, not expressive of any other than a tame dispassionate one. We see often what the world calls regular features, and a good complexion, almost totally unanimated by any discovery of the temper or understanding. Whenever the regularity of feature, beauty of complexion, the strong expression of sagacity and generosity, concur in one face, the features are irresistible.

But even here it is to be observed, that a sort of sympathy has a prodigious bias. Thus a pensive beauty, with regular features and complexion, will have the preference with a spectator of the pensive cast; and so of the rest.

The soul appears to me to discover herself most in the mouth and eyes; with this difference, that the mouth seems the more expressive of the temper, and the eye of the understanding.

Is a portrait, supposing it as like as can be to the person for whom it is drawn, a more or less beautiful object than the original face? I should think, a perfect face must be much more pleasing than any representation of it; and a set of ugly features, much more ugly than the most exact resemblance that can be drawn of them. Painting can do much by means of shades; but not equal the force of real relieve: on which account, it may be the advantage of bad features to have their effect diminished; but, surely, never can be the interest of good ones.

Softness of manner seems to be in painting what smoothness of syllables is in language, affecting the sense of sight or hearing, previous to any correspondent passion.

The 'theory of agreeable sensations' founds them upon the greatest activity or exercise an object occasions to the senses, without proceeding to fatigue.

Violent contrasts are upon the footing of roughness or inequality. Harmony or similitude, on the other hand, are somewhat congenial to smoothness. In other words, these two recommend themselves; the one to our love of action, the other to our love of rest. A medium, therefore, may be most agreeable to the generality.

An harmony in colours seems as requisite, as a variety of lines seems necessary to the pleasure we expect from outward forms. The lines, indeed, should be well varied; but yet the opposite sides of any thing should shew a balance, or an appearance of equal quantity, if we would strive to please a well-constituted taste.

It is evident enough to me, that persons often occur, who may be said to have an ear to music, and an eye for proportions in visible objects, who nevertheless can hardly be said to have a relish or taste for either. I mean, that a person may distinguish notes and tones to a nicety, and yet not give a discerning choice to what is preferable in music. The same, in objects of sight.

On the other hand, they cannot have a proper feeling of beauty or harmony, without a power of discriminating those notes and proportions on which harmony and beauty so fully depend.

What is said, in a treatise lately published, for beauty's being more common than deformity, (and seemingly with excellent reason) may be also said for virtue's being more common than vice.

Quere, Whether beauty does not as much require an opposition of lines, as it does an harmony of colours?

The passion for antiquity, as such, seems in some measure opposite to the taste for beauty or perfection. It is rather the foible of a lazy and pusillanimous disposition, looking back and resting with pleasure on the steps by which we have arrived thus far; than the bold and enterprising spirit of a genius, whose ambition fires him only to reach the goal. Such as is described (on another occasion) in the zealous and active character of Horace:

—*Hanc atque hunc superare laboret.*
Instat equis auriga suos vaccentibus; illum
Prædium temenos extremos inter euntem.

Again,

Again, the

Nil actum reputans, si quid restaret agendum, is the least applicable, of any character, to a mere antiquarian; who, instead of endeavouring to improve or to excel, contents himself, perhaps, with discovering the very name of a first inventor; or with tracing back an art that is flourishing, to the very first source of it's original deformity.

I have heard it claimed by adepts in music, that the pleasure it imparts to a natural ear, which owes little or nothing to cultivation, is by no means to be compared to what they feel themselves from the most perfect composition. The state of the question may be best explained by a recourse to objects that are analogous. Is a country-fellow less struck with beauty than a philosopher or an anatomist, who knows how that beauty is produced? Surely no. On the other hand, an attention to the cause may somewhat interfere with the attention to the effect—They may, indeed, feel a pleasure of another sort—The faculty of reason may obtain some kind of balance, for what the more sensible faculty of the imagination loses.

I am much inclined to suppose our ideas of beauty depend greatly upon habit—what I mean is, upon the familiarity with objects which we happen to have seen since we came into the world. Our taste for uniformity, from what we have observed in the individual parts of nature, a man, a tree, a beast, a bird, or insect, &c.—our taste for regularity from what is within our power to observe in the several perfections of the whole system.

A landkip, for instance, is always irregular; and to use regularity in painting, or gardening, would make our work unnatural and disagreeable. Thus we allow beauty to the different, and almost opposite, proportions of all animals.

There is, I think, a beauty in some forms, independent of any use to which they can be applied. I know not whether this may not be resolved into smoothness of surface; with variety to a certain degree, that is comprehensible without much difficulty.

As to the dignity of colours, Quere, Whether those that affect the eye most

forcibly, for instance, scarlet, may not claim the first place; allowing their beauty to cloy soonest: and other colours, the next, according to their impulse; allowing them to produce a more durable pleasure?

It may be convenient to divide beauty into the absolute and the relative. Absolute is that above-mentioned. Relative is that by which an object pleases, through the relation it bears to some other.

Our taste of beauty is, perhaps, compounded of all the ideas that have entered the imagination from our birth. This seems to occasion the different opinions that prevail concerning it. For instance, a foreign eye esteems those features and dresses handsome, which we think deformed.

Is it not then likely that those who have seen most objects, throughout the universe, *ceteris paribus*, will be the most impartial judges; because they will judge truest of the general proportion which was intended by the Creator; and is best?

The beauty of most objects is partly of the absolute and partly of the relative kind. A Corinthian pillar has some beauty dependent on it's variety and smoothness; which I would call absolute: it has also a relative beauty, dependent on it's taperness and oilage; which, authors say, was first copied from the leaves of plants, and the shape of a tree.

Uniformity should, perhaps, be added as another source of absolute beauty, (when it appears in one single object.) I do not know any other reason, but that it renders the whole more easily comprehended. It seems that Nature herself considers it as beauty, as the external parts of the human frame are made uniform to please the sight; which is rarely the case of the internal, that are not seen.

Hutchinson determines absolute beauty to depend on this, and on variety; and says it is in a compound ratio of both. Thus an octagon excels a square; and a square, a figure of unequal sides; but carry variety to an extreme, and it loses it's effect. For instance, multiply the number of angles till the mind loses the uniformity of parts, and the figure is

is less pleasing; or, as it approaches nearer to a round, it may be said to be robbed of it's variety.

But, amidst all these eulogiums of variety, it is proper to observe, that novelty sometimes requires a little abatement. I mean, that some degree of familiarity introduces a discovery of relative beauty, more than adequate to the bloom of novelty. This is, now and then, obvious in the features of a face, the air of some tunes, and the flavour of some dishes. In short, it re-

quires some familiarity to become acquainted with the relation that parts bear unto the whole, or one object to another.

Variety, in the same object, where the beauty does not depend on imitation, (which is the case in foliage, bustos, basso-relievos, painting) requires uniformity. For instance, an octagon is much more beautiful than a figure of unequal sides; which is at once various and disagreeable.

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HARRISON'S COLLECTION.



S K E T C H E S;

OR,

E S S A Y S

ON

V A R I O U S S U B J E C T S.

BY

LAUNCELOT TEMPLE, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



L O N D O N :

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THE
P R E F A C E.

THE Author of the following Papers chuses to call them SKETCHES ; as the least imperfect amongst them is to a laboured treatise, what the painter's outlines, or his first rude draughts, are to a finished picture. This declaration, he hopes, will be accepted by the proper judges of writing, as a sufficient apology for any thing, either in thought or expression, that may be found careless or incorrect in his ESSAYS. He owns he could have given those little loose fragments much bolder strokes, as well as more delicate touches : but as an author's renown depends at present upon the mobility, he dreads the danger of writing too well ; and feels the value of his own labour too sensibly, to bestow it where, in all probability, it might only serve to depreciate his performance.

SKETCHES ;

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SKETCHES;

OR,

ESSAYS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

SKETCH I.

OF LANGUAGE.

ALMOST every one that can read, pretends to judge of the author's style, as it is called: but how few are there who really know good language from bad! Even the best judges are sometimes divided in their opinions; for want, it would seem, of a common standard by which the merits of different languages, as well as different writers in the same language, might be compared. If I was to reduce my own private idea of the best language to a

definition, I should call it the shortest, clearest, and easiest way of expressing one's thoughts, by the most harmonious arrangement of the best chosen words, both for meaning and sound. The best language is strong and expressive, without stiffness or affectation: short and concise, without being either obscure or ambiguous; and easy and flowing and disengaged, without one undetermined or superfluous word.

SKETCH II.

OF GENIUS.

THERE is a standard of right and wrong in the nature of things, of beauty and deformity, both in the natural and moral world. And as different minds happen to be more or less exquisite, the more or less sensibly do they perceive the various degrees of good and bad, and are the more or less susceptible of being charmed with what is

right or beautiful, and disgusted with what is wrong or deformed. It is chiefly this sensibility that constitutes Genius; to which a sound head and a good heart are as essential as a lively imagination. And a man of true Genius must necessarily have as exquisite a feeling of the moral beauties, as of whatever is great or beautiful in the works of nature; or masterly

masterly in the arts which imitate nature, in poetry, painting, statuary, and music.

On the other side, where the heart is very bad, the genius and taste, if there happen to be any pretensions to them, will be found shocking and unnatural. Nero would be nothing less than a poet; but his verses were what one may call most *villainously* bad. His taste of magnificence and luxury was horribly glaring, extravagant, and unnatural, to the last degree.

Caligula's taste was so outrageously wrong, that he detested the works of the sweet Mantuan poet more passionately than ever Mæcenas admired them; and if Virgil had unfortunately lived down to those times in which that monster ap-

peared, he would probably have been tortured to death for no other crime but that he wrote naturally, and like an honest man.

True Genius may be said to consist of a perfect polish of soul, which receives and reflects the images that fall upon it, without warping or distortion. And this fine polish of soul, is, I believe, constantly attended with what philosophers call the moral truth.

There are minds which receive objects truly, and feel the impressions they ought naturally to make, in a very lively manner, but want the faculty of reflecting them; as there are people who, I suppose, feel all the charms of poetry without being poets themselves.

SKETCH III.

OF TASTE.

OUR notion of Taste may be easily understood by what has been said upon the subject of Genius; for mere good Taste is nothing else but genius without the power of execution.

It must be born; and is to be improved chiefly by being accustomed, and the earlier the better, to the most exquisite objects of Taste in it's various kinds. For the taste in writing and painting, and in every thing else, is insensibly formed upon what we are accustomed to; as well as Taste in eating and drinking. One who from his youth has been used to drink nothing but heavy dismal Port, will not immediately acquire a relish for Claret or Burgundy.

In the most stupid ages there is more good Taste than one would at first sight imagine. Even the present, abuse it with what contemptuous epithets you please, cannot be totally void of it. As long as there are noble, humane, and generous dispositions, amongst mankind, there must be good Taste. For in general, I do not say always, the Taste will be in proportion to those moral qualities and that sensibility of mind from which they take their rise. And while many, amongst the great and the learned, are allowed to have Taste for no better reason than that it is their own opinion, it is often possessed by those who are not conscious of it, and dream as little of pretending to it as to a star and garter. An honest farmer, or shepherd, who is

acquainted with no language but what is spoken in his own county, may have a much truer relish of the *English* writers than the most dogmatical pedant that ever erected himself into a commentator; and from his *Gothic* chair, with an ill-bred arrogance, dictated false criticism to the gaping multitude.

But even those who are endowed with good natural Taste, often judge implicitly and by rote, without ever consulting their own Taste. Instances of this passive indolence, or rather this unconsciousness of one's own faculties, appear every day; not only in the fine arts, but in cases where the mere *Taste*, according to the original meaning of the word, is alone concerned. For I am positive there are many thousands who, if they were to bring their own palate to a severe examination, would discover that they really find a more delicious flavour in mutton than in venison, in slobber than in turbot, and yet prefer middling or bad venison to the best mutton; that is, what is scarcest and dearest, and consequently what is, from the folly of mankind, the most in vogue, to what is really the most agreeable to their own private taste.

In matters of Taste, the public, for the most part, suffers itself to be led by a few who perhaps are really no judges; but who, under the favour of some advantages of title, place, or fortune, set up for judges, and are implicitly

citly followed even by those who have taste. These washy dictators have learnt at school to admire such authors as have for ages been possessed of an undisputed renown: but they would never have been the first to have discovered strokes of true genius in a cotemporary writer, though they had lived at the court of Augustus or of Queen Elizabeth.

So undistinguished is our Taste, that if the most torpid dunce this fruitful age can boast of, could by some artful imposture prepossess the public, that the most insipid of all his own bread-sauce compositions, to be published next win-

ter, was a piece of Milton's, or any other celebrated author, recovered from dust and obscurity, it would be received with universal applause; and perhaps be translated into French before the town had doated six weeks upon it. One might venture to say too, that if a work of true spirit and genius was to be introduced into the world, under the name of some writer of low reputation, it would be rejected even by the greatest part of those who pretend to lead the taste. And no wonder, while an eminent vintner has mistaken his own old hock at nine shillings the bottle for that at five.

SKETCH IV.

OF TURGID WRITING.

NOISE and bluster is what passes for sublime with the great majority of readers; and there are people who think nothing can be strong or solid but what is clumsy. Yet the genteel dignity of Whitehall, and the elegant cheerful simplicity of St. Paul's in Covent Garden, may stand as long as that purse-proud wit of the Treasury, or even the squat solidity of the Horse Guards.

Unnatural, forced, exaggerated swelling, whether in sentiments or language, is owing to false taste and want of true genius. The Hercules of Goltzius is that very sublime in person. It is intended to express the most excessive robustness of figure: but the painter, in endeavouring to represent the human form in it's utmost degree of strength, has aggravated the demi-god into a mere awkward monster; as ridiculous a giant as either of the brothers at Guildhall.

To take it in another view, that clumsy robustness of manner, which, by the way, does not partake of true vigour, for that always performs it's business without straining, is the same thing to the spirited ease which is necessary to good writing, that the awkward efforts of a huge, heavy, ill-shaped dray-horse, and a lame one too, are to the easy actions of the most supple Arabian that ever was dressed by St. Amour.

That writing can never be very good which is not easy; but it does not follow that all easy writing is good. Writing may be very easy, and yet, Heaven knows, very insipid. And when you begin to suspect that your writing is easy indeed, but wants spirit, the wisest thing you can do is to let your pen drop and go to bed.

SKETCH V.

OF AFFECTATION OF WIT, AND FLORID WRITING.

IT is not always so easy to get rid of an impertinent companion, as of a silly book; otherwise, to be for ever aiming at Wit, would be as teasing and intolerable in writing as in conversation. Too much even of genuine Wit is cloying, and the vanity of displaying it incessantly will fatigue and disgust every reader whose taste is true. Olives, dace, care, anohovies, and Dutch herrings, do very well in their place; but, in the

name of all the hospitable powers, do not oblige us to dine upon them. Let us first lay a foundation of good plain beef or mutton, if you please: for there is no living upon pickles or sweetmeats alone.

The ground-work of every performance, even of those which admit or require the greatest profusion of ornaments, ought to be plain and simple. Observe Nature: in the meadow, the

sweet green, which never dazzles the sight, is the predominant colour; while the gaudy flowers, red, white, yellow, blue, and purple, are carelessly interspersed. This is infinitely more pleasing and beautiful than that insipid, childish, uncomfortable bauble called a flower-knot; and the wild variety of the woods as far excels the richest plantation of flowering shrubs. I would not be above taking a hint even from the mechanic arts: if a suit of cloaths is overcharged with lace, it becomes tawdry and ungenteel. In every work, the true taste is to dispose the ornaments with ease and propriety, and not to be affectedly or too ostentatiously prodigal of them. By this means you bestow upon your performance an elegant richness, and such a modest dignity as will please every true eye, though it may quite escape the notice of the vulgar, and false critics of all ranks, who delight in nothing but what is glaring, tawdry, and ostentatious.—No, I beg their pardon: for they are sometimes in raptures, or seem to be so, with what is altogether insipid.

Let the ornaments be never so well executed, if they are not easily and naturally introduced, they will have an awkward effect. The most beautiful woman may disgust you by ostentation, and a declared intention to charm. As often as it is possible to contrive it so, the or-

naments should be, or at least appear to be, of some use towards the main design of the work: but when they are bluntly produced, and with too barefaced a purpose to dazzle or entertain, instead of your admiration, they raise your contempt. A masque, a coronation, or a procession upon our stage, is, for the most part, an insipid, tawdry, tiresome shew. But if it was really an ornament, to introduce it with propriety and grace, it ought to be contrived as an incident to help on the business of the piece: as in the masque in *Romeo and Juliet*; and the funeral procession, such as it is, in *Richard the Third*; which, notwithstanding some want of *decorum*, as the critics call it, and of probability in the scene, has still some kind of pretence to assist in the business of the fable.

To conclude: the ornamental parts of a work cost the least trouble to a writer who has any luxuriance of imagination. To support the plain parts with an easy dignity, so as they shall neither become flat on the one hand, nor disgustingly stiff on the other, is a much more difficult task. And yet, if you succeed never so well here, you will receive little thanks from the generality of readers; who will be apt to imagine they could easily perform the same kind of work themselves, till they come to try it.

SKETCH VI.

OF OBSCURE WRITING.

AS the first end of all writing and speaking is to be understood, it seems to follow, that Obscurity must be the greatest fault in either. One would think it needless to insist upon this; yet there are readers so absurd as to admire an author the more for every now and then plunging into the unintelligible: as a dash of mystery procures more reverence from weak minds to any scheme of religion, than it's most virtuous or most rational precepts. Some clumsy scholars too, who must needs be making awkward love to the scornful Muses, and tumbling them with their coarse paws; when they come to an obscure passage in an author, whom they are determined to admire, tell us we must not always expect the same clearness in writers of the first class as in the more inferior ones. Such is their cant even in talking

of dramatic writing, in which Obscurity is more unpardonable than almost in any other kind of production. But the dullest and most shallow of those critics could write obscurely himself; and if he writes much, he must have *ill luck* not to do it sometimes. For to write obscurely requires no other talent or skill than to express one's meaning imperfectly; or if that is not enough, to write without any meaning at all. However, amongst a different kind of critics, perspicuity has always been reckoned an essential quality to good writing; and if sometimes a great author is found deficient in this article, it only shews how difficult it is to express some things with clearness and ease. For one may very safely presume that no good writer, where it was prudent to speak out, ever expressed himself obscurely from choice.

SKETCH

SKETCH VII.

OF THE MODERN ART OF SPELLING.

AN author seems reduced to great extremities, who flies to new Spelling to distinguish himself.

These innovations are pedantic and conceited trifles; and the best, or rather the only good reason for ever altering a long established Spelling, is, that the writing may come the nearer to the pronunciation. But our reformers in the art of Spelling, who at present chiefly confine themselves to one class of words, to substantive nouns and verbs derived from the Latin, such as *honour, favour, labour*, while they write *honor, favor, labor*, increase the distance between the writing and pronunciation, or rather they produce one where there was none before; for the *u* in all these words, except in a few where it is generally omitted in the common spelling, as *horror, terror*, is at least as much felt in the pronunciation as the retained vowel *o*. Some have, unhappily enough, subjected to the same innovation other words, which contain the diphthong *ou*, though they have no relation at all to the Latin, and write,

endeavor, neighbor, behavior. Why don't they proscribe this hated *u* in *adjectives* too; and instead of *invidious, odious, glorious*, write *invidios, odios, glorios*? As they have gone so far, I can see no good reason why they should stop short here.

Trifles betray the character: and it is somewhat strange, if it has escaped the penetration of those philosophers who have employed part of their talents in characterising the age, that there hardly needed any other instance to distinguish the present as an *unmanly* one than this very aversion to the honest vowel *u*; without whose assistance it would be impossible to pronounce some of the most important and most interesting words, to any thing of a man, in the whole English language. And it is not unworthy our observation here, that a late noble Author, whose parts were manly enough in the earlier days of his life, did not begin to *castigate* his Spelling after this manner, till he was considerably advanced in years.

SKETCH VIII.

OF NEW WORDS.

IT is the easiest thing imaginable to coin words. The most ignorant of the mobility are apt to do it every day, and are laughed at for it. What best can justify the introducing a new Word is necessity, where there is not an established one to express your meaning. But while all the world understands what is meant by the word *pleasure*, which sounds very well too, what occasion can there be for saying *voluptu*?

Nothing can deform a language so much as an inundation of new words and phrases. It is, indeed, the readiest way to demolish it. If there is any need to illustrate the barbarous effects which a mixture of new words must produce, only consider how a discourse, patched all over with sentences in different lan-

guages, would sound; or how oddly it would strike you in a serious conversation to hear, from the same person, a mixture of all the various dialects and tones of the several counties and shires of the three kingdoms: though it is still the same language. To make it sensible to the eye; how greatly would a mixture of Roman, Italic, Greek, and Saxon characters, deform a page? A picture, imitating the style of different masters, which is commonly called a Gallery of Painters, can never be pleasing for the same reasons, want of union and harmony.

The present licentious humour of coining and borrowing words, seems to portend no good to the English language: and it is grievous to think with what vo-

* See some posthumous works of a right honourable Author, published not many years ago in defence of our holy religion.

lupt two or *poctararorencouroac* * eminent personages have *opiniatred* the *in-coabation* of such *futile barbarisms*.

In short, the liberty of coining words ought to be used with great modesty. Horace, they say, gave but two, and Virgil only one to the Latin tongue, which was *squeamish* enough not to

swallow those, even from such hands, without some reluctance.

I cannot conclude without putting our writers and speakers in mind of an excellent advice from Mr. Pope, on this subject of new and old words:

Be not the first by whom the new are tried,
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside †.

SKETCH IX.

OF SUPERANNUATED WORDS.

INSTEAD of creating a parcel of awkward new words, I imagine it would be an improvement to degrade many of the old ones from their *peerage*. I am but a private man, and without authority; but an absolute prince, if he was of my opinion, would make it capital ever to say *encroach* or *encroachment*, or any thing that belongs to *encroaching*. I would commit *inculcate*, for all its Latinity, to the care of the paviours; and it should never appear above ground again. If you have the least sympathy with the human ear, never say *purport* while you breathe; not *betwixt*, except you have first repeated *between* till we are quite tired of it. *Metbinks* strongly resembles the broken language of a German in his first attempts to speak English. *Methought* lies under the same objection, but it sounds better.

It is full time that *forward* should be turned out of all good company, especially as *perverse* is ready at hand to supply his place. *Vouchsafe* is a very civil gentleman; but as his courtesy is somewhat old fashioned, we wish he would *deign* or *condescend*, or *be pleased* to retire.

From what rugged road, I wonder, did *fluxerve* deviate into the English language?—But this *subject matter*!—In the name of every thing that is disgusting and detestable, what is it? Is it one or two ugly words? What is the mean-

ing of it? Confound me if ever I could guess! Yet one dares hardly ever peep into a preface, for fear of being stared in the face with this nasty *subject matter*.

Wittol is an old-fashioned, ill-sounding word; but as there is frequent occasion for it, and no other word so perfectly expresses its meaning, we cannot afford to part with it.

But to pick out all the awkward old words, which continue to be as current amongst us as the worn-out sixpences, it would be necessary to peruse the dictionary from A to Z. A most desperate uncomfortable labour! As heart-breaking a task as it would be to wade through half a volume of the *Statutes at Large*; nay, by Heaven! I would almost as soon take it upon me to read the most insipid tragedy that has been brought upon the stage these seven years. But if one could submit to this labour, and should presume to set a mark upon every word one did not relish, there may be people of a different opinion; and no private person has authority enough to prohibit the use of any word, if he finds it ever so intolerable to his own ear. For my part, I shall endeavour to pass through life as inoffensively as possible, both to the world and my own conscience; and hope, and pray, I may never be reduced to the necessity of using

One word, which dying, I would wish to blot†

* The word for the number *three*, in one of the American languages; which, to judge by this specimen, cannot be barbarous for want of polysyllables.

† See Mr. Pope's Essay on Criticism.

‡ See the Epilogue to Mr. Thomson's *Coriolanus*.

SKETCH X.

OF MUSIC.

MUSIC, I presume, can no further be properly called one of the imitative arts, than as it expresses the Passions; and in this respect only can be admitted as the sister of Poetry and Painting. So that mere harmony has little pretension to such an alliance; for it is no more music than mere versification is poetry.

The Italian compositions, for the most part, mean nothing beyond harmonious sound; and are as much inferior to what ever is truly pathetic in Music, as a tragedy, which depends upon noise and shew, is to a plain passionate one, which represents a natural and moving picture of life, and of the human mind. A family piece, even such a one as the celebrated work of Vandyke at Wilton; where, though the drawing is exact, and the attitudes easy and natural, the figures are all gaping and unemployed; is a mighty tame performance when compared with a grand history by Raphael, Rubens, or the same Vandyke himself, where every thing is expressive, warm, passionate, and interesting.

But it is not even mere harmony; difficulty of execution is the sublime, at which the greatest part of our modern masters aspire; as if it required the least genius either to compose or execute difficult music. While these are the objects of emulation amongst our composers and performers, the opera is likely to continue a most ravishing entertainment.

We run mad, or rather foolish, after this imported music; while we have much better of our own. Most of the modern Italian compositions only trifle with the ear; the Welch, the Scotch, the Irish music, reaches the heart. The productions of our present Italian masters are thrummed over for a season, because they are new; and forgot for ever afterwards, because when you have heard them twenty times, you find them still as insipid as at first. The music, which charmed these

islands long before the boasted revival of this art in Italy, or rather in Flanders, is as established as the ancient classics; and those compositions, short and simple as they are, never become thread-bare, but give delight and rapture every time they are heard.

There is a certain resemblance of air between the music of the ancient Britons, the Irish, and the Scotch; and yet they are all very distinguishable from one another. There is a remarkable difference of character even between the music of the north and the south of Scotland. The northern is generally martial, for the most part melancholy, and bears a strong resemblance to the Irish: the southern is pastoral and amorous, with such an air of tender melancholy, as love and solitude, in a wild romantic country, are apt to inspire. Each of them has a wildness peculiar to itself. The wild spirit of the south breathes a sweeter air of rural solitude; that of the north is more sullen, and sometimes what one might almost call dreadful. Besides, the gay sprightly airs which each of them has produced, are in as different styles as the genius and manners of the people in the two extremities of Scotland, or the face of the countries they inhabit; both of which are wild, but I believe, with a very different air.

The British poetry is universally allowed, by the best judges of both, to be much superior to the Italian; and why should you wonder to find the music of the one country brought into competition with that of the other? The music of these islands seem to agree in character with that of the ancients; which, from the accounts we have of it, excelled in simplicity and passion. How simple the music must have been that delighted Greece in the days of Alcæus, Sappho, Pindar, and Anacreon, seems to appear from the very make of their capital instrument the Lyre.

SKETCH XI.

OF ENGLISH VERSE.

RHYME, we have often been told, is a modern invention; though, if that was a crime, it might perhaps be proved to be not so very modern either. It is reckoned a barbarous one by some pedants; who finding, I suppose, from the opinion of better judges than themselves, that it is abominable in Greek and Latin, conclude that it must not be less so in French and in English. The contrary is evident to every one that has ears, and dares think for himself: for in English, rhyme is capable of much harmony; and the French can have no versification without it. But some people, who ought to know better, seem to make no allowance for the original deference between one language and another; and are ready to quarrel with the English as a barbarous language, because it is not Latin or Greek. They do not consider that every language has powers and graces peculiar to itself; and that what is becoming in one would be quite ridiculous in another. Of this it is sufficient to produce one obvious example: the transposition of words, which gives such a grace and spirit to the Greek and Latin languages, and without which they would become detestably flat and insipid, does not at all suit the genius of the English; except sometimes in poetry; and, by the way, I am afraid there are too many ungraceful transpositions current amongst our English poets.

But it is not only a few obscure pedants who are thus dissatisfied with their mother-tongue; and would be glad for its improvement to torture it from its native shape, some into Latin, and others into French; for attempts of this nature have been actually made by men of superior note. Sir Philip Sidney, who, notwithstanding his affected manner, must be allowed to have possessed a great share of genius, would every now and then spur up his gallant English into a most unbecoming ridiculous trot after the Greek and Latin hexameters. It is certainly impossible to introduce the Greek and Latin measures into English poetry with any success; yet Sir Philip was fond of this project, and pursued it with a strange obstinacy. He recom-

mended it to Spenser; but Spenser had too true an ear to relish such awkward unnatural versification, or countenance it by his example. At least their is nothing remains of him to shew that he ever practised it. There have been attempts made since to the same purpose by Milton and some later authors. But there never was any thing seen so ungraceful, or so despicably pedantic, as all essays of that kind which have hitherto appeared. I do not know that it has ever yet been tried, except by Milton in some parts of his *Samson*; but of all the Greek or Latin measures, the Iambic seems the most capable of being adopted into the English poetry.

I have either read or heard that a poet of the last century, whom I shall not name, because I am not perfectly sure of the fact, pretended to some secrets in versification, which he did not chuse to communicate. If it was so, it shewed a jealousy unworthy of so great a master of numbers: he might safely enough, for his own superiority, have published those secrets, whatever they were; for it is impossible they could ever be of much use. He could easily advise you to vary your pauses, and tell you which are the most graceful: but these and all such precepts are nothing to the purpose; a good ear will naturally produce harmony without the least regard or attention to rules; and there is no cure for a bad one. The only way to improve the ear, whether good or bad, is to accustom it to the most harmonious writing.

Blank verse admits of a greater variety of pauses than rhyme, and is partly for that reason the fittest for works of any considerable length. But in English poetry I question whether it is possible, with any success, to write odes, epistles, elegies, pastorals, or satires, without rhyme. And it happens luckily, that in these short pieces the ear has not time to be tired with the return of the chimes: which, in my humble opinion, had better sometimes play a little false to one another than be for ever scrupulously exact; provided such licences never shock the ear.

It does not require a very exquisite ear

ear to write too smooth or even harmonious lines running: yet in rhyme, a poet, who is always very careful to polish his couplet, may pass with the multitude for a great master in versification. But as long as his harmony is confined within such narrow bounds, he writes but like a school-boy, who keeps in the line only with the help of ruled paper.

Dr. Swift and Mr. Pope took offence, one does not know why, at the triplet, and very rarely condescended to admit it into their verse. It is true, it had been used to a nauseous excess by some tasteless writers; and Mr. Pope's own imitation of Rochester might justly enough give him a disgust to the triplet for his whole life. Yet it contributes not a little to the grace of Dryden's versification: and I can see no reason why it should be prohibited now; as it gives a variety to the numbers, which in rhyme are sufficiently limited to require such a help: besides, it may often be in your power, by it's means, to compress within three lines what must otherwise straggle into four, and of course become languid and spiritless.

Variety is the soul of versification; and the march of the lines ought to be adapted to the subject. The measure is the same in both; but had Horace wrote his epistles or satires in the same kind of numbers with Virgil's *Æneid*, it would have been a monstrous impropriety; like hunting the fox or hare on a war-horse, with the equipage of a general at a review, or on the day of battle. He knew very well that, in familiar writing, dignity of versification would be quite ridiculous. Accordingly in those parts his numbers are loose, rambling, and often almost prosaic. But in his most careless and licentious periods he seldom or never hurts the ear: and as often as there is any thing great in his sentiment, his expression and numbers rise in proportion, and sustain themselves with a native unaffected dignity; till without falling he descends on easy and dextrous wings to the familiar again.

It does not seem quite foreign to the present subject to take some notice of a certain French author, who, after having given it as his opinion, that Mr. Pope is

the most harmonious of all the English poets, adds, with a very plausible assurance, that he has reduced the sharp hissings of the English trumpet to the sweet sounds of the flute*. It is no great wonder, that one who is apt to write much at random, should presume to talk so contemptuously of a manly, an elegant, and harmonious language, with which he plainly appears to have but a very superficial acquaintance. But who ever talked before of the *hissings of a trumpet*—or of *sharp hissings*? We have all heard of the *hoarse trumpet*, but the *hissing trumpet* is an instrument with which we are not yet acquainted. However, to pass these little improprieties, this compliment to Mr. Pope shews how well this critic is qualified to pronounce sentence upon the English poets. No one is more sensible than I am of Mr. Pope's merit; but his blindest admirer might startle at the preference bestowed upon him here. For, not to mention the great names of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton, upon such an account as only compares Mr. Pope in this point of view with a writer upon whom, as they say, he formed himself, and whom not only in his own opinion, but in that of many others, he is thought to have excelled in the art of versifying. It is almost needless, after this, to say that I mean Dryden; whose versification I take to be the most musical that has yet appeared in rhyme. Round, sweet, pompous, spirited, and various; it flows with such a happy volubility, such an animated and masterly negligence, as I am afraid will not soon be excelled. From the fineness of his ear, his prose too is perhaps the sweetest, the most mellow and generous, that the English language has yet produced.

Had Mr. Voltaire known as much of the English poets as he pretends to do, he might have found something like the *sweet sound of the flute* in Mr. Waller; who wrote before Mr. Pope was born. Mr. Voltaire, before he presumed to compare the English poets, should have known, that before Mr. Waller appeared, there was one Edmund Spenser a poet, whose verse was not merely indolently smooth, but spirited also and harmonious. And if Mr. Voltaire was

* Mr. Pope—Est, je crois, le poëte le plus elegant, le plus correct, et ce qui est encore beaucoup, le plus harmonieux qu'ait en l'Angleterre. Il a réduit les siffemens aigres de la trompette Angloise au sons doux de la flute. VOLTAIRE—*Lettres sur les Anglois*.

a perfect and a candid judge in this case, he would own, that there was more harmony in many of the English poets — much more than the French language

can attain to, or an ear debauched by the French versification is capable of relishing.

SKETCH XII.

OF THE VERSIFICATION OF ENGLISH TRAGEDY.

THE greatest part of our modern writers of Tragedy seem to think it enough to write mere blank verse; no matter however hard it be, however void of swelling and harmony. Even those of them who write the best numbers, study to be solemn and pompos through-out, and affect a monotony of heroic Versification, from the first appearance of the heroine with her confidante, to her last fatal exit; without the least regard to the variety of passions, which express themselves in quick or slow, flowing or interrupted, in languishing or impetuous movements.

The proper Versification of English Tragedy is most certainly blank verse; but as different from the solemn and majestic movement of heroic poetry as the Iambic is from the Hexameter. What a monstrous production would a Greek or Latin tragedy in hexameter verse appear! The ancients found the grave Iambic their proper measure for tragedy; as it is at the same time capable of all the dignity which that kind of poem requires, and descends with the greatest ease to the level of prose and conversation. Such as is the Iambic in Latin, is blank verse in English: but by no means the blank verse of Paradise Lost.

The numbers ought to be accommodated to the passion: and though in some parts of tragedy it is proper they should be slow, or solemn, or languishing, they ought for the most part to run somewhat rambling and irregular; and often rapid and subsultory, so as to imitate the natural cadence and quick turns of conversation.

Shakespeare, who I will venture to say had the most musical ear of all the English poets, is abundantly irregular in his Versification: but his wildest licences seldom hurt the ear; on the contrary, they give his verse a spirit and variety, which prevents it's ever cloying. Our modern tragedy-writers, instead of using the advantages of their

own language, seem in general to imitate the monotony of the French Versification: and the only licence they ever venture upon, is that poor tame one, the supernumerary syllable at the end of a line; which they are apt to manage in such a manner as to give their verse a most ungraceful halt. But it is not want of ear alone which makes our common manufacturers of tragedy so insipidly solemn and so void of harmony: it is want of feeling. For let the ear be what it will, if the passions are warmly felt, they will naturally express themselves in their proper tones.

Tragedy requires a greater variety of numbers than any other poetical productions; as it is the most agitated with different passions. The march of every poem of any considerable length, but chiefly of tragedy, ought to resemble the course of a river through a large extent of country diversified with plains, hills, and mountains. The stream, according as the ground lies through which it flows, is either slow, smooth, and solemn; or brisk and sportful; or rapid, impetuous, and precipitate. Such and so various ought to be the Versification of tragedy; instead of that stiff affected importance of movement, which is now absurdly and awkwardly supported through the whole course of these sublime performances.

But besides this studied dignity; this inflexible gravity of pace; this unvaried exactness of measure without spirit or harmony; this immoveable hardness and want of fluctuation in the lines; there is no language so unnatural as that you meet with in most of our modern tragedies. The characters they represent are too heroic, it would seem, and too much exalted above common life, to speak *after the manner of men*. The misfortune is, most of our tragedy-writers labour with all their might, and keep themselves perpetually upon the rack, to say every thing poetically: for

it never enters into their head, that the most natural is the most poetical way of saying common things; except sometimes where you can properly raise your expression by an easy metaphor. Let the sentiments be such as best suit the character and situation, and they cannot be expressed with too much plainness and simplicity, provided all vulgarisms are as much as possible avoided.

As to the Characters; if it was not for a very few exceptions, one would think the art of drawing them was lost amongst our dramatic writers. Those that appear in most of our modern plays,

tragedies call them, or comedies, are like bad portraits; which indeed represent the human features, but without life or meaning; or those distinguishing strokes which, in the incomparable Hogarth, and in every great history painter, make you imagine you have seen such persons as appear in the picture. In short, those mechanical performances are as imperfect as unnatural representations of human life, of the manners and passions of mankind, as the Gothic knights which lie along in armour in the Temple church are of the human figure.

SKETCH XIII.

OF IMITATION.

THE humble vanity, as one may call it, of imitating another person's manner, is one great source of affectation; which is generally ridiculous, and always disagreeable. A person whose natural turn is genteel, if he keeps good company, will insensibly acquire as much of their manner as becomes him; but if he sets up any one as a pattern to be exactly imitated, his behaviour will grow constrained, stiff, and affected. Such will be the constant success of so absurd an attempt to confine the variety of nature; which plainly intends that mankind should be distinguishable one from another by their air, voice, and manner, no less than by their faces.

A poet, a painter, or a player, that imitates closely, will never excel; and this will hold good in every thing else that belongs to genius. It is true, that education and study are necessary to the improvement of genius: but to this purpose it is sufficient to be familiarly ac-

quainted with the greatest masters; and the earlier in life the better. By this means, if you delight in them, and have any similarity with them, you will catch their graces without affecting it; and your own original characteristical manner will still distinguish itself. But if you study to form yourself upon them, you become only a copy of a copy. The greatest of them excel by their happy skill in copying nature: and if you content yourself with servilely copying them without drawing immediately from the common subject nature; you will always be inferior to your original, and have no chance ever to produce any thing great or striking.

In the mean time, I do not imagine that true genius was ever much hurt by imitating. For though it is natural for young people to imitate a favourite author at first, it is not probable that true genius will submit to be so fettered long.

SKETCH XIV.

OF WRITING TO THE TASTE OF THE AGE.

WHATEVER some have pretended, one may reasonably enough doubt whether ever an author wrote much below himself from any cause but the necessity of writing too fast. When this happens to a writer

who, with the advantages of leisure and easy circumstances, is capable of producing such works as might charm succeeding ages, it is a disgrace to the nation and the times wherein such a genius had the misfortune to appear.

It belongs to true genius to indulge its own humour; to give a loose to its own sallies; and to be curbed, restrained, and directed, by that sound judgment alone which necessarily attends it. It belongs to it to improve and correct the public taste; not to humour or meanly prostitute itself to the gross or low taste which it finds. And you may depend upon it, that whatever author labours to accommodate himself to the taste of his age—suppose it, if you please, this present age—the sickly wane, the impotent decline of the eighteenth century; which from a hopeful boy became a most insignificant man; and, for any thing that appears at present, will die a very fat drowsy blockhead, and be damned to eternal infamy and contempt: every such author, I say, though he may thrive as far as an author can in the present age, will by degrees languish into obscurity in the next. For though naked and bare-faced vanity; though an active exertion of little arts, and the most unremitting perseverance in them; though party, cabal, and intrigue; though accidental advantages, and even whimsical circumstances; may conspire to make a very moderate genius the idol of the implicit multitude; works that lean upon such sickle props, that stand upon such a false foundation, will not be long able to support themselves against the injuries of time. Such buildings begin to totter almost as soon as their scaffolding is struck.

But if you find it necessary to comply with the humour of your age, the writing best calculated to please a false taste, is what has something of the air of good writing, without being really so. For to the vulgar eye the specious is more striking than the genuine. The best writing is apt to be too plain, too simple, too unaffected, and too delicate, to stir the callous organs of the generality of critics, who see nothing but the tawdry glare of tinsel; and are deaf to every thing but what is shockingly noisy to a true ear. They are struck with the fierce glaring colours of Old Frank; with attitudes and expressions violent, distorted and unnatural: while the true, just and easy, the graceful, the moving, the sublime representations of Raphael, have not the least power to attract them.

The bullying, noisy march in Judas Macchabees, has perhaps more sincere admirers than that most pathetic one in Saul: and in conversation pertness and mere vivacity is more felt by the general run of company than easy unaffected wit; as flashy, bouncing, statulent cyder, boasts of more spirit than the still vigour of reserved Madeira.

But the easiest, as well as the most effectual, way of writing to the bad taste of your age, is to set out while your genius is yet upon a level with it. Accordingly, if you have a son who begins to display a hopeful bloom of imagination, be sure to publish, with all the advantages that can be procured, the very first essays of his genius. They will hardly be too good to please; and, besides, they have a chance to be received with particular favour and admiration, as the productions of a young muse. When he has thus taken possession of the public ear, he may venture, as his genius ripens, to do his best; he may write as well as he can, perhaps without much danger of sinking in reputation. The renown of his first crude essays will be sufficient to prejudice the mobility, great and small in favour of the most exquisite pieces he can produce afterwards. But if he must live by his wit, the best thing you can do for him is to transplant him, as early as possible, to Paris; where, in the worst of days, in the most Gothic muse-detesting age, there is still some shelter afforded to the most delicate as well as the most uncommon flower that blossoms in the human mind. In that gay, serene and genial climate, the Muses are still more or less cultivated, though not with the same ardour and passion in every age; as appears from the following passage translated from a French author*, who wrote about the beginning of the present century. 'Almost all the arts have in their turns experienced that disgust and love of change which is natural to mankind. But I don't know that any one of them has felt it more than Poetry; which in some ages has been exalted to a triumphal height, in others neglected, discouraged, and despised. About sixty years ago, under the administration of one of the greatest geniuses that ever

* *Défense de la Poésie; par M. l'Abbé Mestieu. Mémoires de Littérature, Tome 2dne.*

France produced, poetry found itself amongst us at it's highest pitch of glory. Those who cultivated the Muses were regarded with particular favour: this art was the road to for-

tune and dignified stations. But in these days this ardour seems to be considerably abated. We do not appear to be extremely sensible to poetical merit, &c.'

SKETCH XV.

OF PHYSIOGNOMY, OR THE SIMILITUDE BETWEEN THE PERSON AND THE MIND.

THAT the face is a false glass, is a vulgar error, and seems to have taken it's rise from a few exceptions: for all mankind are so much physiognomists, that whoever happens to find himself mistaken, though but for once, joins the cry of the proverb. All are not alike skilled in faces, any more than in unravelling of characters; even the most penetrating eye may be mistaken: yet I will presume to say, that the face is seldom a false glass; and when it proves so, it is generally the fault of the beholder. Perhaps indeed Nature has made some cheats, some to appear worse, many much better, than they are. This is of a piece with her usual variety, and was perhaps partly intended to check the presumption of mankind in judging too rashly of one another. Yet still the face is not a false glass. On the contrary, where the qualities of the mind are eminent, it generally shews them. For the features of the mind commonly follow those of the face; as the figure of most animals, whose characters are strong, is expressive of their nature. Though you had never heard of a lion, a tiger, a serpent, or an alligator, it is natural to think you would at the first sight be afraid of them rather than of a hare, or even a horse, whose appearance might prove formidable, but more from his size than his make.

The mind is for the most part visible in the person. Thus, a bearish figure is almost certainly the rhind or hulk of a rude rough soul, never to be polished by any cultivation. If you find any sweetness in the kernel of such a rugged shell, it is more than you ought to expect; for a man is one thing, and a chester another. The voice too is in general harsh or sweet, conformably to the features; and where faces resemble one another, you will perceive a remarkable similitude in the voice.

Sense and virtue are often to be found

under a plain face and clumsy figure; but elegance and delicacy of mind generally appear in the person. Where a false and specious elegance appears in the face, you may expect the same in the mind; and the herd of mankind will admire them more than the true. Sometimes you meet with a delicate and elegant mind under a face that cannot properly be called handsome: but then you will generally observe a spirit and expression in such a face that pleases a true eye much more than mere regular beauty; for the best part of beauty is air, meaning, and expression.

The ancient Greeks, besides their being the most ingenious and elegant, were the most beautiful race of mortals that ever appeared in the world. The modern Greeks preserve the fine mould of their ancestors; and, if they were blest with liberty, would probably in a short time exceed all their neighbours in every excellence that human nature can boast of, whether ornamental or solid. Exquisite organs are, I believe, for the most part, beautiful too; and it is better to have a handsome ear than a very large one; though the latter is by the laws of the animal oeconomy more favourably contrived for the over hearing of a whisper.

It is a common observation that the painter constantly draws the finest hands whose own is of an elegant make. This is universally ascribed to a cause which is perhaps more obvious and plausible than true: for the painter often draws a hand in attitudes in which he never sees his own. It was probably more owing to something within themselves, than to the different styles of nature to which they are accustomed, that Rubens and Raphael are so different in their ideas of beauty, and their representations of the human form. Vandyke studied under Rubens; and as he lived in the same country, was accustomed to the same

kind of objects with his master: yet their works are as different as their persons were; the one robust, but rather clumsy; the other handsome and

genteel. In short, the productions of the genius seem to be a kind of propagation, and bear a family resemblance to the parent.

SKETCH XVI.

OF PREJUDICES, POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS, OR NATIONAL.

THIS ungenerous spirit, these ill-natured humours only, are so extremely absurd, that if strong instances of them were not seen every day, it would be impossible for a man of sense to believe them. For my own part, if I am totally free from any of the common weaknesses of mankind, I take it to be this. What is it to me what any man's principles are as to religion or government? He has perhaps as good a right as I, perhaps a better, to keep steady to the principles in which he was educated. My religion may, for want of early instruction, appear as strange to him as his can to me. These things are all merely accidental and the effect of education: for a hot headed churchman, bred at any Protestant university, or the sourest Christian that ever dissented from the orthodox church of England, would have been as violent a Mahometan, if he had received his system of religion from the Mufti at Constantinople. Can it be supposed, that Heaven puts itself at the head of any religious party!—I humbly think it appears plainly enough, that the Almighty, who displays such infinite variety in all his works, no more intended that all mankind should be of the same religion, than that they should be all of one colour, speak the same language, observe the same customs, and wear the same dress: and it is not less reasonable than charitable to believe, that the virtuous of all religions are equally acceptable to the universal Father. For little as we know of Heaven, I hope we may, without any blasphemy, presume that the superior powers are at least as reasonable as the best of us.

It is still not quite out of nature for people in certain humours, whether from the wine, or the weather, to grow sour to one another for matters of mere opinion: nay, and proceed to downright quarrelling, either for the glory of God or their own vanity. But the utmost effort of narrow-thinking, and what appears perfectly astonishing, is the aversion

which some people bear in their minds to all those who did not happen to be born on the same spot, in the same little island, or the same corner of an island with themselves. Good God! would you have all the world to have been born in Ireland? In the name of every thing that is whimsical, what does it signify where a man was born? Can it be either a merit or a crime, an honour or a disgrace, to have been born in any particular spot of this globe; were it in St. Giles's, the Old Bailey, or even within the execrable walls of Newgate itself? One would think they must be at a prodigious loss for something to value themselves upon, who are proud of the place of their birth. Most people pretend to laugh at what is called family pride: and yet, though according to nice herald-like ceremony, the son, as the better gentleman, ought to take the wall of the father; this kind of pride is perhaps not quite a proper object of ridicule: for whoever esteems himself upon account of his noble ancestry, must of course emulate their virtues, and be afraid to violate their memory by any action unworthy of them. It is needless, and might be mistaken for flattery, to produce the many shining examples of this generous emulation which adorn the present age. Even without any very distinguishing merit of his own, the son has often some claim to a favourable reception for the sake of his father. But he stands upon a very bleak situation who has nothing to shelter him from contempt but the name of his country. For Heaven's sake, what country is it the most honourable to have been born in? What climate? What latitude? Under the Equator? Or what particular distance from it? I hope it is not in those climates where the weather is the finest, and the seasons the most agreeable. But is there a country, at least in Christendom, where the generality of the people, rough as they run, are not as stupid and as wicked as the arch-enemy of mankind would wish to make them? The great bulk

bulk of the Irish, I am sorry to say it, are bad enough, very ragged cattle indeed; it is in vain to deny it. The general run of the Scotch, as well as of the French, Spaniards, and Italians, is so very, so extremely little better, that it might puzzle the most sagacious connoisseur to pronounce which is worst. The English, though for every kind of merit as estimable as any nation in Europe, are, with regard to the great majority of their individuals, just as unhappy as the rest. God preserve us! what strange animals, what shabby Christians, have had the honour to be born in the metropolis of Great Britain!—of reputable, most reputable parents too!—in this very London! and not to talk of Rag Fair, or Drury Lane, in the superb neighbourhood of Grosvenor Square, and St. James's itself.

But the merit or value stamped upon any animal from the meridian of it's nativity, is not more fantastical than that which it receives from the place of it's education. Yet there are thousands who dream that no science is to be learnt but within those very walls, whence after many years residence themselves had come into the world with a moderate enough share of erudition. It would be highly unreasonable to reflect upon any school, because a great number of dunces happened to have been bred there: but people of this narrow way of thinking are really a reproach to their tutors. One would be sorry to see any illiberal jealousy rise amongst our universities for such a simple dispute, (a yet *tetrior quam uterrima belli causa*) as which of them has sent out the most numerous herd of learned blockheads. For any blockhead, whose genius leads him to much poring over heavy volumes, may become a man of great learning in the most illiterate ground, in the most unconsecrated you can name. But for their own sakes it is to be hoped, that those learned bodies will agree to suppress all animosities of this nature; lest in the course of their altercations it should be discovered, that all those seminaries of learning, however dignified with the specious titles of

Academies, Colleges, or Universities, are mere artful impositions upon the ignorance of mankind. For there are many instances to prove with what small helps from education good natural parts may shine: and a man may turn out a very considerable blockhead without ever having been taught metaphysics.

As the most hopeful antidote to the poison of this very domestic education, one would prescribe a visit to foreign parts. And if, after a ramble through Europe, the obstinate malignity should still shew itself in fresh eruptions, it might be worth while to try a seven years residence in America: if the patient returns before he is thoroughly cured, I can see no good reason why he should not be transplanted for life.

But a strong obstacle to the cure of this folly, is the advantage which some *honest* people find in fomenting it. For the mob, I mean the great bulk of mankind, in judging of men, are mere botanists: they distinguish them only by their outward types; the class or tribe they belong to, or *seem* to belong to. For want of being able to penetrate a little deeper into the character, they prefer a man for the cock or no cock of his hat, or the healths he toasts; and are the more obstinate in their attachment to him, the less reason they can give for it: as the votaries of any religion are the more zealous and violent, the further it's principles are removed from common sense.

To conclude, as we begun, with Religion. It is nothing to me in whom or in what any man believes. I have no objection in the world to an honest man, because he believes in Mahomet, as long as he gives himself no impertinent trouble about my faith. Nay, I could tire upon good terms even with a Deist; provided he keeps within the bounds of decency, and does not carry with him through life that juvenile vanity, which will not suffer him to be quiet, till he has told all the world that he laughs at those things which they consider as the most sacred and inviolable.

SKETCH XVII.

OF MORAL ATTRACTION AND REPULSION.

ODERUNT NILARUM TRISTES, TRISTEMQ; JOCOSI,
SEDATUM CELERIS, AGILEM GNAVUMQ; REMISSI.

Hor.

THE SULLEN HATE THE GAY, THE GAY THE SAD,
THE SLOW THE ACTIVE, AND THE QUICK THE STAID.

THIS was observed by one who knew mankind as thoroughly as most writers. And it is an observation that may justly be extended to all people of opposite dispositions. For every knave naturally hates an honest man; and the dimmest most misty blockhead has penetration enough, except you would rather call it instinct, to discover a man of parts; and cold virulence enough to detest him. The Miser abhors the man who generously enjoys his fortune; and hopes to see the prodigal starve. As this is the case, it would require some skill in the doctrine of chances, to calculate how many enemies a man of sense and integrity is likely to have for one friend.

On the other hand, people of similar characters are apt to like one another. There is not a genuine ruffian in Turkey, not even in Christendom, so abandoned to all sense of humanity, so void of all sympathy with the human-kind, that would not take some little pains at

least to favour the escape of the wretch who had just murdered his father. Upon these two principles of aversion and attachment, if they are not rather, in the present view, one and the same, it is probable that the most important of human affairs sometimes depend. It is perhaps more owing to this than to any single cause besides, that one age is so different from another. For a very few individuals in a nation may have influence enough to throw the great weight of it's business into such hands as shall render it either glorious or contemptible, either miserable or prosperous.

But it is now full time to conclude: for when the writer is tired, it is highly probable the reader must begin to yawn, if he is not fast asleep already. For which reasons, what I had further to say shall be dispatched in as few words as possible, and without any over-scrupulous attention to method or regularity.

SKETCH XVIII.

SENTENCES.

THE sententious manner of writing is apt to be dry, and to give disgust by its oracular air, and a dogmatical over-bearing pretension to wildom. Perhaps it would be better, if it's severity was alleviated with a comfortable mixture of human nonsense. For, to be perpetually *wise*, is forbidding, unsocial, and something that does not become human nature, as it does not belong to it. Why should a school-master, a parson, or an apothecary, affect to be as solemn and sublime the whole year round, as if he was a seraph or an archangel come to dwell among *us*?

The world has been shamefully imposed upon by many an important fool: but no man of sense ever took any pains to appear wise; as no honest man ever used any tricks to display his own integrity.

Most fools, and many sensible people, are conceited: but people of the best sense never are so.

Affectation labours with a diligence that fatigues every spectator, but with infallible success, to defeat it's own purpose; for instead of creating love or admiration, it provokes our aversion and contempt. The most amiable people

are always the least affected. Let us make the best of what Nature has done for us: she may be improved, but all attempts to alter her from her original shape will only expose us to ridicule. That awkward beast the dromedary, as long as he has any sense, will never pretend to be a Bajazet or an Othello.

I knew a poor gentleman who used to be grievously tormented with violent fits of the head ach, because a celebrated poet was subject to that complaint. Such a head-ach I suppose as Jupiter felt just before he was delivered of Pallas by the rough midwifery of Vulcan's hammer; which seems to give a broad hint towards the cure of this kind of *Cephalalgia*, as the learned doctors delight to call it.

Affectation is the bane of every thing. An honest, plain, downright blockhead, supposing him at the same time good-natured, may not only be an useful but an agreeable creature. But when a blockhead is seized with the whim of being a fine gentleman or a wit, the Lord have mercy upon him—and us.

I am not offended at the insipidity of Mr. Fitz Dotterell's observation, nor even at it's impertinence, because I know he meant me no harm: what provokes me, is that he calls it a joke.

A fellow who, without a grain of wit or humour, will always be joking, is not only a disagreeable and contemptible companion, but a dangerous one. For his awkward, unwary nonsense, will be apt one time or another to make him stumble into a quarrel; and he may lose his friend, or perhaps his life, without the satisfaction of having had a good joke for it.

'T'other bottle wo'nt do—No, nor the other hog'shead neither—You great pale-eyed loggerhead, you must have patience—You must wait a good while before you rouse Mr. Truewit's mettle—A long time indeed!—You must wait till your own wit begins to sparkle—I am afraid you must wait till you're gone.—There is a secret power in your presence enough to check every thing that's genial—You are worse than a fog or the east wind.—The candles burn dim while you're here—and the Burgundy drinks as flat as Port. Good night. Here's to your good repose. May you sleep like any porpus!—But hark ye, good Mr. Van Numb, before you go—You can't live without wit, it seems—

Bless your fat head! are you sure that you know wit when you hear it?—Let me be curs'd if you do, even when you pore over it in print at the rate of an octavo page in an hour.

It is illiberal, inhuman, and unreasonable in the highest degree, to insult any man for his being dull: but when dullness pretends to genius or parts, it becomes a fair object of ridicule.

True satire may be called the rage of probity, and even of good-nature. It is the indignation of virtue and wit against vice, ill-nature, and affectation.

From wit to metaphysics is a desperate stride, yet we will venture it rather than defer our opinion of this science to any future occasion. We take metaphysics, in the degree to which they are carried by certain philosophers, to be *the art of talking grave nonsense upon subjects that lie beyond the reach of the human understanding*. Better talk about the weather itill; or blunder through the mist of politics; or retail those insipid daily lies we call *news*.

I have seen people, that were no fools, laugh at the wrong place, and without being tickled, that they might not appear dull at taking a joke. What is worse, I have known people, who were not quite fools neither, affect to be angry without feeling any affront; because they would not be thought to want apprehension or spirit.

Vanity, besides the secret pleasure it gives one's self, is a very thriving quality; and it is not politic to be at any pains to disguise it, except amongst people of the best sense. For the generality of the world will have the same opinion of you that you seem to have of yourself.

False or middling genius is almost always arrogant and vain. The true may be provoked to do itself justice; but is seldom apt to overvalue itself.

Though vanity and pride are very different things, we may talk here of that kind of pride which hurts your inferiors, and keeps those at a distance who are never likely to abuse your familiarity. It seems to be the consciousness of little minds, who are afraid of being seen too near. It is to be proud only where you may, with the utmost safety, be so; for *those* proud people are almost always mean and servile to such as rank above themselves.

Now

Now that we are talking of unreasonable animals: there is a waspish fellow who must discharge his venom where he dares; and every day uses you like a dog—because he's your *cousin* truly, and may be free with you. When the wind is easterly this *cousin* becomes absolutely intolerable. Perhaps, after all, he intends you no great mischief in the main. But, in my opinion, the best way to manage such a *cousin* is to give him a most inhuman thrashing. He'll bounce, and sting, and raise a cursed outcry; but don't spare him: for with Heaven's blessing it will do him an infinite deal of good; and make him as civil, till he begins to forget it, as the politest enemy you ever had the happiness to converse with. Besides, you'll find a sublime pleasure in the exercise of just vengeance—By all that's imperial, it is a luxury almost too high for a subject!

Superficial people are always the most ostentatious. I suppose you may remember that you used to be the fondest and most vain of the thing you were but just beginning to learn.

Many shallow people make their fortunes by the mere force of gossiping. With some it passes for knowledge of the world; whereas it is only practising an art which, though insupportably tedious and insipid to men of taste and spirit, instead of costing *them* any trouble, is their native element; for they were born gossips.

The blunt sword is the trusty weapon. And there is nothing so infallibly successful in all trades and professions as the parts of a blockhead; plodding, selfishness, cunning, and impudence: which last virtue may be reckoned the chief of *these* cardinal ones; for

Nullum nomen abest si sit impudentia.

The ambition of a man of parts is often disappointed for the want of some common quality, with whose assistance very moderate abilities are capable of making a great figure.

Some people have just parts enough to do their country a great deal of mischief: for if their understanding was the smallest degree lower, it would be too glaringly ridiculous to employ them.

Some have died upon the scaffold for their faithful services to their ungrateful

country. You remember the shocking catastrophe of those great and good men the De Wits.—By all that's stern and horrible! by the black-hung room! by the blood-thirsty saw-dust! you're in the right—The surest way to avoid ingratitude, is never to do one good thing while you live.

Many excellent geniuses have been lost. But we ought not to repine too much at this seeming inattention of Providence to human affairs; as from the same cause perhaps a much greater number of shocking monsters have been smothered and suppressed. For I am afraid there are more Neros and Caracallas than Tituses or Trajans in private life, who want nothing but to be emperors to shew themselves. Immortal gods! how many thousand Claudiuses are at this hour asleep between Hyde Park Corner and Wapping!

I am afraid it is easier to corrupt good natural dispositions by education and habit than to subdue bad ones.

There are people that were born liars; who tell you every day very seriously a parcel of insipid unmeaning lyes, and probably believe them. It is a mere odd kind of weakness in them; they cannot help it; perhaps they are not sensible of it. Nay, I do not know whether there is not such an absurd creature as a thief that has little more scheme or meaning than a pilfering jackdaw.

Though there are strange inconsistent mixtures in human nature, there never yet was a very fine understanding where the heart was bad.

There is a parcel of crazy worthless people who set up for wits, and bring the name of Poet under a kind of disgrace with those who do not know that there can be no true genius without a sound understanding and an honest heart.

Some of those people do more indiscreet, irrational, absurd things, than even nature prompts them to: some become sots, and affect every thing that is indecent and shocking, merely that they may pass, good God! for men of genius; and they are admitted as such by the majority of their acquaintance for no other reason.

Oddities and singularities of behaviour may attend genius; when they do, they are it's misfortunes and it's blemishes. The man of true genius will

be ashamed of them: at least, he never will affect to distinguish himself by whimsical particularities.

In short, good sense is the solid foundation of all genius, and of every thing that is truly ornamental. It is necessary, in some degree, even to a good fiddler: still more so to one who composes music. A blockhead, drunk with mortal Port, might have drawled out such a pitiful strain as *God save our noble King—or, To Arms, and Britons Strike Home*; but he must have had taste and genius who composed *Joy to great Caesar*, or even *The Early Horn*.

Except Handel's Oratorio, one seldom goes to a musical entertainment where the great bulk of the pieces is not insipid. They have plenty of good music, but the performers are most provokingly frugal of the best. The reason I plainly take to be this: almost every scraper upon the violin has perhaps composed more or less music himself; and, instead of the works of the great masters, they entertain you with their own. If reading was a public entertainment; if authors were the only readers, and the choice were left to them, I suppose the great writers of former ages would soon be forgotten.

It is a question with me, whether the music of a country is to be performed, any more than it's language pronounced to perfection, but by those that have been young in it; or, what comes nearly to the same thing, have been taught it young by a native of that country.

People of the finest ear very often have not the least turn to mimicry; while, on the contrary, some of the best mimicks are mis-tuned, and have not the least ear to harmony.

It is impossible to make such a definition of wit as shall comprehend every kind of it. But it seems to consist chiefly in a happy faculty of comparing* distant objects, and surprizing you with the discovery of a striking resemblance where you did not dream of finding any.

The wit of some, who have a large share of it, is too much of one kind, and proves cloying for want of variety.

An author, who affects to be fine in every thing he says, and to write above

his subject, is just as ridiculous a coxcomb as he who performs the most indifferent actions with a studied grace. And this affectation is one principal cause of the awkward unnatural language which prevails in most of our modern tragedies.

Mr. Voltaire observes very justly of some authors, that they have done themselves no good by endeavouring to be universal. It is a foolish enough piece of vanity to be sure; for it requires no great genius to write a spiritless ode, an affected epistle, an insipid satire, a flat comedy, a cold tragedy, and even a flimsy, soppy, uninteresting epic poem. Shakespeare perhaps possessed the greatest compass of genius that ever man did, and could excel in every thing, from the noblest sublime down to the burlesque.

In some ages the few people of genius ought to publish just enough to shew what they could have done in better times: more is not worth their while.

If there wants any thing besides the applause of the best judges to establish the reputation of your performance, it is the dislike of the worst. For false taste, whatever it may pretend, though it may even impose upon itself, at it's heart naturally hates true genius.

I have heard talk of an Italian who thought the soldier in Vandyke's Belisarius something quite wonderful from a Flemish painter. It would seem he had never heard of one Rubens, a native of Flanders, who, *take him for all in all*, weigh him in the nicest balance, is perhaps inferior to few painters that Italy has produced. True taste is always candid, and naturally delights in true genius, without ever enquiring from what soil it sprung.

I have been told, that some French Abbé, whose name I forget, pronounces, with a very decisive air, that Shakespeare understood all the passions but *love*.—Good God!—Shakespeare not understand *love*?—Who does then?—Voltaire?

Love, anger, grief, all the passions are contagious.

Love is the cause of more indiscretions in old people perhaps than in young.

Dr. Swift says, that no wise man ever wished himself younger. The dean

* In some ingenious Essays, which appeared a few years ago in one of the daily papers, wit was called a *tall faculty of the mind*. There is something odd in the expression, but the meaning is good.

might perhaps have excepted a man renowned for wisdom, who seems to have been gloomy and unhappy in his latter years merely for want of youth.

Died by the sting of a snail would sound oddly in the bills of mortality. Yet I have known a woman of beauty, sense, and spirit, in love with one of the most insipid fellows that ever glared weary stupidity from a large dead eye. Whence it appears, that the infatuation of Queen Mab in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, however extravagant it seems, is not quite out of nature.

As there have been many *small* observations made upon *great* classics, I must take the liberty to venture one. Iago ends his description of a good woman with

She was a wight, if ever such there were—

Here he stops, and Desdemona asks, *To do what?* It does not appear what leads her to this question, except you add a little word, which seems to have dropt out of its place here without being missed.—Suppose it was to be read thus:

She was a wight, if ever such there were,
To—

Here the buffoon pauses, to draw the lady into the question, which it is now natural for her to make; and to give, what he is ready to add, its full effect of surprising and disappointing archly.

Iago. She that was ever fair, and never proud,
Had wit at will, and yet was never loud, &c.

She was a wight, if ever such there were,
To—

Desd. To do what?—

Iago. To fuddle fools, and chronicle small beer.

Why do the players, in the part of Richard the Third, always say—'Give me a horse.' It not only sounds much better, but the meaning is, in my opinion, more warm and spirited as it stands in Shakespeare—

Give me another horse—Bind up my wounds—

As I feel it, there is a kind of tame impropriety, or even absurdity, in that action of Hamlet where he pulls out the two miniatures of his father and uncle. It seems more natural to suppose, that Hamlet was struck with the comparison he makes between the two brothers, upon casting his eyes on their pictures, as they hang up in the apartment where this conference passes with the queen. There is not only more nature, more elegance, and dignity, in supposing it thus; but it gives occasion to more passionate and more graceful action, and is of consequence likelier to be as Shakespeare's imagination had conceived it.

But I beg pardon for these trifles: and, in hopes that you may not all be so ill-natured as to take me at my word, shall conclude with a scrap of Latin that has, like many others, led a weary life; though it is almost as insipid a thing of the kind as ever came upon the town—

Nos hæc novimus esse nihil.

Which, in plain English, means no more than that—I am sensible all these 'Sketches and Sentences are mere nothing.'

S K E T C H E S;

OR,

E S S A Y S

ON

V A R I O U S S U B J E C T S.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

S K E T C H X I X.

OF BUSINESS.

I Should take the most natural and agreeable life to consist in a well-proportioned mixture of business, amusement and pleasure. A life of mere dissipation and pleasure must be exposed to many weary, tedious, insipid hours; and haunted with reflections mortifying to an ingenuous mind. A little business is necessary to keep off the languor which attends idleness, and to prepare you for enjoying the hours of indulgence with a proper quickness of appetite. Unhappy the man who is obliged to live by the business to which he has taken an aversion: though perhaps not more miserable than some independent people, who, having nothing to do, have neither taste nor genius to fill up their time agreeably.

A keen turn to amusement, and to the common drudging business of the world, I believe seldom meet in the same person. A strong disposition to selfish industry, obtuse sensations, (which are seldom unattended with a proper share of confidence) and a moderate degree of discretion and judgment, are sufficient, with the help of a very slight education, to qualify almost any man to succeed in any business. And it is evident, from numberless instances, that a man may arrive at the highest station in some of the most ingenious professions, by just the same kind of talents and arts as make an eminent taylor or a stay-maker.

S K E T C H X X.

OF LUCK.

THAT sensible, or at least that plausible, old saying, *Quisquis suæ fortunæ faber est*, which in plain English means that every man is the carpenter

of bricklayer of his own fortune, is not to be admitted without a great many exceptions; for luck, good or bad, will every now and then be meddling, in

D 2

what

what regards the prosperity of such *republics*, such *vile worms*, as some humble philosophers are pleased to reckon the race of human kind.

Fortuna favet fortibus.—‘Fortune favours the brave,’ says another. A third says, *Fortuna favet fatuis*.—‘Fortune favours fools.’ This last observation seems to have more examples in

it’s favour than both the other two; for fools and weak people, they say, are generally remarkable for good luck. But though fortune interferences ever so evidently in their favour, few of them have the generosity or gratitude to own it; ascribing, or what ought rather to be called imputing, their success entirely to their own superior merit.

SKETCH XXI.

OF LARGE SOCIETIES.

WHEN a great number of weak heads and bad hearts are collected into a mass, they must naturally improve in vice and folly; and very fast too, if they are not kept in order by a wise discipline. It was probably from this consideration, amongst others, that in former times, a prince celebrated for wisdom thought it an object of the utmost consequence to a whole kingdom, to put a stop at once to the further growth of it’s capital. In a very populous and over-grown city, especially if it happens to be the seat of an extensive commerce, great multitudes of people without either education or good natural sense, must grow rich. These, in all popular dissensions, will generally throw their weight into the wrong scale; will join the clamour against the most salutary measures; raving for things unreasonable, impracticable, and what, with better eyes, they would often see detrimental and pernicious to themselves. Yet such heads as these lead the rest of the nation, who consider them as their true and incorrupted source of political intelligence, their vigilant guardians, their safe protectors; the soundest, ablest, and most disinterested judges of whatever belongs to the management of national affairs. God knows to what a contemptible degree they are mistaken! For there is no thing more true, than that the inhabitants of a certain metropolis are, in general, not only the most brutal, indecent and immoral, but the most stupid and ignorant, of the whole people throughout the kingdom.

Oh!—to any one who feels for the

honour and dignity of England, what a subject of shame and mortification it must be, that the bad manners of those who inhabit the capital, expose the whole nation to the contempt of all foreigners!—Oh! good God! to the contempt of all Europe; who must naturally form an unjust opinion of the more civilized and more sensible people in all the most distant corners of the kingdom, from what passes *here*. Where the master of the house is a clown, the whole family partakes in his disgrace; and is even apt to be infected by him. Pray don’t call the people of this town Englishmen—for the honour of England, call them Londoners for ever—the yesty dregs of Great Britain and Ireland, the frothy scum of every nation in Europe, of every province in America, fermenting with the *Gorok-spittle* of Jamaica*, is their composition. Such Englishmen as these Londoners, good Heaven! are the only real enemies of England; which never can be ruined, but by their stupidity, their absurdity, their madness, and villainy. In this blessed meridian of Liberty, the French Protestants too; whose fathers, within the memory of some that are yet alive, fled hither for shelter from an inhuman persecution; are become, of a most humble colony of supplicants, a gang of profligate ruffians, that madly and ungratefully rebel against a government, to which they owed their protection then, and do to this day. In their own original country, the wheel, instead of the gallows, would long ago have put an end to *their* turbulence.

* This is the name by which the country people in Scotland call the white frothy substance, the nest, in which the gnats eggs are hatched amongst the branches of the sorrel and other plants. *Gorok* is their common word for *Cuckoo*.

SKETCH XXII.

VOX POPULI VOX DEI.

THIS sentence must have been first roared out by an impudent leader of some villainous faction: and it is surprising that even the implicit indolence of sensible people should, to this day, have permitted it to pass without the least examination. What?—*The cry of the stupid, ignorant, profane populace, who constitute the great majority of mankind, the voice of God!*—Heaven preserve us! But this horrible blasphemy has been so long familiar to our ears, that we hear it without shuddering, and even acquiesce in it. If those blind gentry are ever in the right, it must be by chance, and they have only stumbled upon it. The tools of knaves must always be in the wrong; and, even when left to themselves, the multitude hardly ever fail to be mistaken.

For instance: of all those who have, in almost every various denomination, from time to time, become favourites with the vulgar here, great and small, within this

present century, how few will be remembered in the next, except with contempt and infamy! Of those idols, from the most exalted stations downward to the meanest; from the monarch's palace down to the tradesman's kitchen, how few have not already survived their fall! renown, rotted alive, and discovered their deformities naked enough to be perceived by the blindest populace that ever disgraced human nature! who, at the same time, are never by any experience, any disappointments, or the most flagrant discoveries, to be cured of their natural propensity to this absurd and fatal idolatry. This stupid idolatry is indeed the only religion that now remains to them. Yet, void as they are both of religion and morals, any cunning impudent knave might so operate upon their stupidity and ignorance, as to throw them all into a holy ferment again, by screaming out that *the church is in danger*.

SKETCH XXIII.

OF THE PRESS.

THE *Liberty of the Press is gone*, was not long ago wantonly bawled out every night and morning from the lurking holes of Grub Street, from the Fleet, the King's Bench, the Marshalsea, and perhaps from Newgate itself, by a parcel of factious scribblers; who, at the same time, were weekly and daily flinging about such indecent abuse, and such impudent pernicious lies, as no wise government, except the present, in any country, or in any age, would, for its own dignity, or the peace, harmony, and happiness of society, have suffered. That the *Liberty of the Press* is gone, was, indeed, too true, at the time when this impudent disingenuous complaint was the most clamorous—But how? and in what sense? The daily and weekly conveyers of political

intelligence, had, for a long time, almost universally, as I am told, shut up their *channels* to truth and common sense; at least, they seldom suffered any thing of that kind to pass. They conveyed nothing almost but impudent lyes, nonsense, and villainy; which indeed is too much the case to this day.

I have for a long time, in sad earnest, considered the art of printing as a most pernicious invention. It puts it in the power of every blockhead and scoundrel to propagate stupidity, brutality, bad morals, deceit, and imposture, throughout the land. In short, the present indecency and licentiousness of the Press, most evidently tends to the abolishing of its *Liberty*, and that of the whole nation.

SKETCH

SKETCH XXIV.

OF THE POOR.

IN any country, opulent or not, it is a disgrace to government, that any one, who dares to claim it's protection, should ever perish for want of necessities. There ought to be no distress from want. Employ the Poor that are able to work; supply the infirm and superannuated with a comfortable subsistence. The greatest miseries of life are often not to be cured, not even to be soothed, by all the advantages of wealth. And what a shameful inhuman crime it is to neglect those to which a wise police could always apply an infallible remedy!

I say again, there ought to be no distress from want. Employ your Poor that are able to work. But we cannot oblige a *free-born Britain* to work, if he is ever so poor—God forbid!—But why? You can confine this son of freedom in a nasty gaol for a trifling debt; you can send him to Tyburn for a pitiful theft; and yet you cannot oblige him to make himself happy, by earning a comfortable livelihood in the way of honest industry. Very true; for, as a *free Briton*, the poorest man is still his own master.—You mean, he

has a right to make himself extremely miserable? But what right has he to recline himself an useless burden upon society? You'll say that society may leave him to starve; as it often does. But what's the good of that? The miserable wretch goes to the dogs; and society loses a hand that might have been of some use. Pray, why do you send your boys to school?—Why, surely, to learn to read and write, and qualify themselves for business, in one shape or another.—Would not they rather pass their time in play, d'ye think?—I suppose they would; but their masters won't suffer them to be idle.—Well, those idle fools we talk of are always children; and ought to be submitted to any authority, that kindly obliges them to be busy for their own happiness.

In a neighbouring country, whose plan of police is, perhaps, the most perfect that ever human wisdom contrived, and the best executed, the poorest creature that can work is not suffered to be idle; the poorest creature that cannot work is not left to starve.

SKETCH XXV.

AN ANECDOTE.

I Am naturally fond of strangers; and, where all other circumstances are equal, should find myself disposed to pay them more or less attention in proportion to their distance from home. Where all things else are equal, in performing any little duties of benevolence within my power, I should prefer a German to a Hollander or a Frenchman; a Greek, a Russian, or a Turk, to a German; a Persian to a Turk; and so on to the utmost limits of the East.—Of all the people upon earth, the Asiatics appear to me the most amiable, noble, and generous: they seem the most possessed with that virtuous heroic enthusiasm, which exalts human nature to it's highest degree of sublimity. One late

well-attested instance of their generous humanity may perhaps not be too tiresome to the impatient reader. The gentleman is but lately dead who favoured me with the following relation of a fact which deserves to be more generally known; and I give it in his own words.

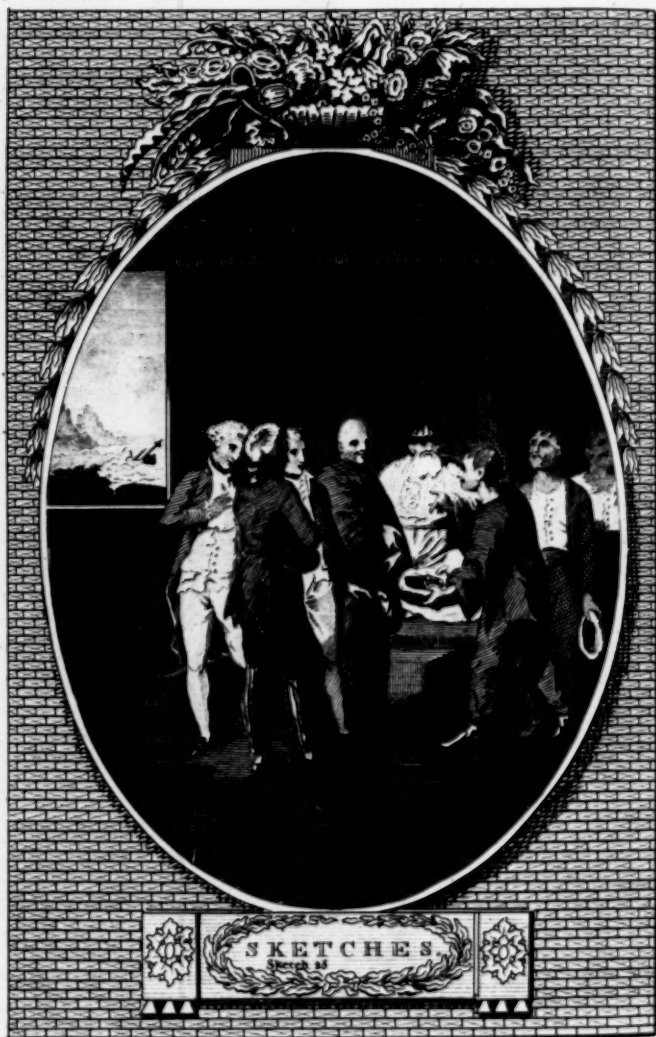
'In the year 1730, the Prince George, Captain Crofs, from Bengal and Surat to Canton, was drove into Juncum Bay, on the coast of China, in a hard gale of wind, of such force as to make the supercargoes, Messrs. Stephenson and Harrison, with Mr. Alex. Wedderburn, purser, go ashore in the pinnace, in order to get a pilot, and such other help as their distress then required. The wind

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wind all that night blowing fiercer, next morning they were told the ship was lost, which they soon perceived to be too true. The Mandarin of that district immediately ordered, that the fore-mentioned gentlemen, with Mr. Barlow, fourth mate, who then acted as coxswain of the pinnace, and the Lascars, should be provided with lodgings, and all proper accommodation; and that every part of the wreck, and all the goods that could be saved, should be carefully gathered together, and put into a secure place for them; all which was faithfully performed. The generous Mandarin's humanity did not end here; for he ordered a present of 350 tale * to Mr. Stephenson, 300 to Mr. Harrison, 250 to Mr. Wedderburn, 200 to Mr. Barlow, and to each Lascar as much as was reckoned equal to their full wages, had the voyage been performed in the usual time: and, at their departure, gave them an order from the court of Peking for carriages, lodgings, and provisions, through every district in their way to Canton.

* One would be glad to know, upon what Christian shore any shipwrecked crew could have met with such humane and generous treatment. What still the more heightens the merit of this noble behaviour, it is well known that the Chinese are not at all fond of trading with the Europeans; and it is probable enough, that some other eastern nations may, in time, become as shy of them, from experience, as the sagacious Chi-

nese have always been from theory and speculation.

'As generous deeds do not appear every day, even in the most sensible, the most virtuous, and most magnificent of all possible ages; there is room here to pay some proper respect to a late act of humanity in the present Emperor of Morocco; which the following extract from his letter to the Grand Master of Malta will explain:

"In the name of God, the sole Almighty. To the Prince of Malta, Grand Master of the Religion of St. John, and to all his Council, the Emperor of Morocco, Fez, Mequinez, &c. wishes health and prosperity. In compassion of several Tulcan slaves, who have long been in my possession, and have never yet been demanded of me, I send them all to be presented to you by my secretary Abladi Salciti: by this means, procuring myself at once the double satisfaction of making you a present, and of restoring liberty to those unfortunate people. If you had no captives of ours in your possession, I should desire nothing of you in return; but as I know that you have, I shall with great pleasure receive such as you may be pleased to send me."

Along with this letter the Emperor sent thirty-seven Christian slaves; and that the Grand Master of Malta returned exactly the same number of Mahometan captives, must have been owing to his having had no more.

SKETCH XXVI.

OF FABLE AND HISTORY.

FOR want of intelligence, or candour, or perhaps of both, there is often too great a mixture of fable in history. On the other hand, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that there is more true history amongst the fables of the ancient poets than we generally imagine. And to compare the historian with the poet, the latter seems not only the most entertaining, but the most instructive, the most ingenious, and most honest of the two; as he does not even expect your belief of every great and wonderful event or action he relates. The mixture

of evident undisguised improbabilities, and what the critics I think call the *marvellous* in Homer, has, in too great a measure, weakened his credit as an historian. Though even in this capacity he has, perhaps, shewn himself much superior, in candour and impartiality, to many at least of our modern history-writers. In support of this observation, I can hardly think it necessary to take notice, that he has in general represented more worthy, amiable, and heroic characters, amongst the Trojan heroes, than in those of his own country.

* Three Tale are equal in value to one pound sterling.

His commentators, I am told, have here and there been struck with some glimpses of true history in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. And indeed I should imagine, that his narration in each of those poems was built upon solid facts; enlivened with fable only to make it the more entertaining and wonderful; and, with the heightening of every ornament to exalt an history into a poem. One particular circumstance, which I don't know that any of these commentators has observed in this light, seems strongly to favour such a conjecture. The hero of the *Odyssey*, after having, with great bravery and address, demolished

the profligate suitors, puts the poor female attendants, who might have been passively concerned in the riots of his house, upon the shocking office of removing the bodies of their slaughtered lovers: and as soon as they have, by his orders, swabbed the bloody hall, he hangs them all up in a string against the wall of the court. Homer could never have made the hero of his poem guilty of such an indecent unmanly piece of cruelty; but found himself obliged, by his attachment to true history, to record it as a real achievement of the hard-hearted Ulysses.

SKETCH XXVII.

THE STUDY OF HISTORY.

HISTORY is, in general, an uncomfortable fatiguing journey through a flat insipid country; a tale too long for human patience. And after all, for want of intelligence and candour in the writers of history, you can seldom trust to it's veracity. What different accounts are given of events that have happened even in our own times! For my part, I find myself much disposed to be an infidel as to many disputed points of history. A battle is an *affair* of such confusion, that few, even of those who have been concerned in it, can explain it's circumstances, or fairly recollect them. It is sometimes as much as you can do to discover which army gained the victory. But what is yet more surprising, it has happened, that some very conspicuous characters in history have been so falsely represented, that the most worthless and contemptible continue to be regarded with admiration; while the best and the most amiable are considered with detestation and abhorrence.

A lively spirited relation of a formidable conspiracy, an important revolution, or any other interesting event, may afford a very agreeable entertainment. But human life is too short; and it requires all the phlegmatic patience of a well-fed lawyer, to attend to a long, drawing, insipid story, if it was ever so true. Livy is far from be-

ing a heavy, loitering, dozing, story-teller. His subject is enriched with a great variety of entertaining events. Notwithstanding his extravagant profusion of coxcomical ornaments, in very good speeches made by himself for people who never spoke them, he dispatches the affairs of a prodigious empire, throughout a whole century of perpetual action, in much less than half the number of pages than one insignificant reign of a king of France or of England has cost to some laborious compilers. And yet, for all the spirit, elegance, and dignity of his narration, perhaps there are not many now alive who have had perseverance enough to attend the great Latin historian to the end of his tale; even shortened as it is by the injuries of chance and time.

So much for history as an amusement. As to it's use towards qualifying a statesman for the management of public affairs, I take it to be very inconsiderable. A general acquaintance with the history of his own country is perhaps enough for a *prime minister*; and some, I am told, have made a tolerable shift to stumble on for many years without even that. With a proper share of sagacity, resolution, activity, and address, an honest statesman might, in the most troublesome times, do great things for his country; though he had never turned over one leaf of either

Livy, Tacitus, or Sallust. Mean time, allusions and references to antient history have long been successfully employed to give some credit, with an air of consequence and dignity, to the

delusive lucubrations of your state empiricks, and their venal journeymen. And this seems to be the only advantage which our statesmen have ever yet drawn from the study of history.

SKETCH XXVIII.

OF FAME.

THERE is as much variety of taste in this capital article of happiness, as in any thing else. For there are multitudes who would be ashamed of a virtuous renown, and proud of what they would think a glorious villainy. An inhuman, dissolute, abandoned villain will naturally admire the character of a Tiberius, a Nero, or a Domitian; and perhaps, without much affectation, despise that of a Titus or a Trajan.

If you are not perfectly indifferent as to the good opinion of the mob, you are one of them yourself. *Their* opinion, as far as all politick views are out of the question, is much below the consideration of every man who has any tolerable share of understanding. But he who is above the opinion of the better and more sensible part of mankind; he who does not regard it with the utmost reverence; is most certainly capable of every thing that is base and villainous.

SKETCH XXIX.

OF REVENGE.

THE gratification of this passion in the hands of a sensible man, a person of moderation and humanity, will hardly ever, in cold blood, exceed the bounds of an exact retaliation. So far I should reckon it just, and a proper supplement to the laws; which afford no redress in many cases of the most insupportable injustice. I could perhaps forgive an act of villainy which is not cognisable by the laws—but I don't chuse it; it is against my principles; it is weak, impolitical, and absurd.

In such cases, you have nothing but the fearful apprehensions of your own resentment, to keep rascals in awe.

Every act of just vengeance is a *terror to evil doers*; and contributes somewhat to the safety of honest and inoffensive people: perhaps it might even to the stability of government; if it should ever become so despicably weak, so tottering and paralytick, as tamely to bear the insults of an abandoned, stupid, cowardly populace.

SKETCH XXX.

OF BLASPHEMY.

THERE is a set of vain crazy mortals, I was going to say half-witted fellows, but that would be too great a compliment: fools, that attempt to shine by talking blasphemy. Good God! it would be a small triumph to outshine all those geniuses in that stile. I fear the thunder at least as little as any of those indecent reprobates; but I cannot be so stupidly ungrateful, as to insult the adorable Author of my being, and all the pleasures of my life. There

surely needs very little wit to ridicule the ideal God of the vulgar; who conceive the stupendous Creator of the universe; the Almighty Spirit, who has produced every thing that is good, great and beautiful; to be a testy, ill-natured old man, with a long beard.

After all, to give the devil his due; a knave, who is always at bottom, a fool, as indeed most of us are, is of all animals the least unpardonable for complaining of his Maker.

SKETCH XXXI.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

WHAT we call Evil, as well as every thing that is good, most certainly sprung from the great Fountain of all existence. Heaven, which gave us corn, wine, and oil, sent us also war, famine, and pestilence. The most pernicious things have their uses; and the rankest poisons, skilfully managed, prove the most powerful medicines.

In moral life, a perfect character would be a monster; at least I should hardly chuse the society of a man who was above all human weaknesses. The amiable medium of virtue, to the best of my apprehension, lies between a rigid, severe, minute, exact, over scrupulous sanctity, and a dissolute profligacy. It avoids the one, as disagreeable, uncomfortable, and forbidding; the other, as indecent, shocking, and contemptible.

I humbly conceive, that there cannot be much pleasure in a state that is not, in one shape or another, obnoxious to pain; and that none but the Almighty himself can enjoy an uninterrupted and immutable happiness. The heathen elysium has nothing to recommend it but ease and tranquillity; green fields and serene weather; which one would wish sometimes to change for a storm. The happy heroes there are a parcel of mere loungers; insipid murderers of time; or rather, useless trifling wasters of eternity. It is difficult to imagine any thing so tiresome as their condition. The Mahometan paradise is flattering indeed as to one article of pleasure; but that is hardly enough—for even love itself may, once in forty or fifty years, sigh for a truce of a few hours; at least for a little variety. Without variety, life is insipid in this world: and the happiest situation in the next may possibly enough be somewhat exposed to disagreeable rubs; that it may not sink into a state of insipid dissipation, or supine inactivity. You all know what horrible riots and combustions broke out in heaven at the time that Old Satan, or his Sulphureous Highness, (according to the title with which he has lately been dignified by a pulpit orator) lost his wits, and rebelled against almighty power. What squabbles may

have happened there since, Heaven only knows; as all historical intelligence from thence has been shut up ever since the cessation of inspired writing.

In short, the Christian Hades, with a tolerable mixture of variety, would be a more eligible situation, than either the heathen Elysium, or the Paradise of Mahomet. To fry for ever under the dog-days must be horrible. But with a reasonable variety of cool air, fresh spring-water, iced cream, plenty of good Rhenish, Old Hock, Moselle, Cyder, Burgundy, and some other comfortable things, one might make a tolerable shift *there*; or even in Jamaica itself.

But to be very serious; without a certain mixture of what we call Evil, the beautiful and entertaining variety which the Almighty Creator exhibits both in the natural and moral world, must have been imperfect. If this mixture was not necessary to the beauty and perfection of nature, it must have been unavoidable. For it is beyond the power of God himself to perform things naturally impossible. There are numberless things, both in the natural and moral world, which no more depend upon the will of God, than that two and two make four; or that a sphere is more capacious than any other figure under the same extent of surface. A proportionable sensibility of pain, must, I suppose, unavoidable attend that of pleasure. God Almighty has given you sense enough to take care of yourself; but, to be perfectly secured from burning or drowning, you must have a world without either fire or water.

To conclude; if *the ways of God* *man* needed any *vindication*, why may we not presume that, supposing a mixture of *real* evil to be unavoidable, the Almighty should chuse to admit some evil, rather than that there should be no good; to expose his creatures to some chance of pain and misery, rather than that there should be no creation; rather than that infinite space, the scene of his stupendously magnificent and most beautiful works, should for ever remain waste, empty, and desolate?

SKETCH

SKETCH XXXII.

OF FASCINATION.

THE language of the eyes is so expressive, as to be understood at the first glance. But the art by which the rattle-snake, and others of the serpent family, can ogle a hare into their formidable jaws, or,

Drink from the midst of heaven the ill-pois'd lark,

might deserve some consideration. Some honest sensible naturalists appear confident of the fact. For my part, though I have never yet seen it, strange as it is, I have no right to say it is impossible. I can conceive a man in such a state of mind and circumstances, as to find himself tempted to do the very thing that would give him the utmost horror. That most unhappy madman Caligula, they say, would often tell Cæsonia, of whom he was so passionately fond, *How easily could I strike off this charming head of thine!*

I recollect, upon this occasion, some lines in a poet, who of all mankind had the most intimate acquaintance with human nature.—

What if it tempt you towards the flood, my lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
That beetles o'er it's base into the sea—

The very place puts *Toys* of desperation
Without more motive into every brain,

That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
And hears it roar beneath.

If I remember right, Montaigne, who does not seem to have been of a melancholy complexion, somewhere says, that when he found himself upon the top of some hideous precipice in his mountainous neighbourhood, he had often felt an impulse to leap down. The shocking fate of a young lady, who, according to report, within these two or three years, while she was observing the dreadful figure of a large shark, slipped out of the cabin-widow into the sea, might possibly enough have been owing to some desperate impulse of this kind.

As one would do any thing reasonable to rescue the memory of a great man from unjust reproach, I think it impossible that Empedocles could have been so very weak, as by a fly slip out of this world, either to hope or wish to pass for one of the *immortal gods*. The hollow surface might have failed him; he might have slipped in by the mere chance of an unlucky step; he might have been suffocated by the sulphureous steam; or, on the brink of the burning gulph, he might naturally enough have grown giddy; or have been seized with such *Toys of desperation*, as Shakespeare talks of. But neither envy, malice, nor jealousy, have the least acquaintance with generosity or candour.

SKETCH XXXIII.

THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE UPON GENIUS.

THERE are people so bigoted to some particular theory, to false opinions and prejudices, as indolently to surrender even their own sensations to them. There are in this island some renegadoes absurd enough to tell you, that Britain lies at too great a distance from the sun to produce any Genius. It is really paying too much attention to such tasteless, ignorant, superficial connoisseurs, to ask them, what country in Europe, what climate the nearest to the sun, has displayed a richer bloom of Ge-

nus, in almost any department, than has spontaneously sprung up in this foggy island; without even any kind fostering influences from the superior powers—excepting those alone of Heaven and Nature. In what kind of Genius is this island inferior to any nation under the sun! How many Geniuses has the happy climate of Italy produced, in any shape, since the days of Augustus? The genial fruitful latitude of Greece has now lain quite fallow for near two thousand years. Spain should be ashamed

to boast of, or even to own her noble, generous, her delightful Cervantes, whom she pitifully suffered to starve. But what great Geniuses has ever the warm climate of Africa produced? from the coast of Barbary to that of Guinea? from the mouth of the Nile to the Cape of Good-Hope?

There are perhaps only two arts in which this island yields to any climate, however near the sun. It appears that the vainest Romans did not pretend to vie with the Greeks in statuary. Yet, what artists in that way has modern Italy produced superior, or even equal to those of old Rome?—Very few, I believe, and if it was not for Michael Angelo, perhaps one might venture to say none; though Italy, I suppose, lies as near the sun as it did eighteen hundred years ago. If the English have hitherto excelled in painting, it may be imputed to circumstances that need no explanation. But, notwithstanding all the obstacles to true Genius in this island, it has, within these few years, lost a painter of singular excellence; as natural and expressive, I'll venture to say it, in the comic and familiarly moral style, as Raphael was in the serious and sublime. And you may wait many centuries before such another flower blows in *any* climate. I reckon that still, *even in this age*, our island may boast of several geniuses, who, for instance, in portrait perhaps excel every painter in Europe since the days of Vandyke: to whom unprejudiced posterity may find them at least equal; some perhaps superior. We

have some too who are admirable in landscape.—But these geniuses are still alive; and some of them may be seen at a coffee-house, where they look much like other people. A hundred years hence, a connoisseur may probably enough wish to make a journey of a thousand miles to see them; and would be gloriously happy, on his return home, to tell his neighbours he had shook them by the hand. As to history itself, beside some promising specimens of it at home, perhaps even this barren age has produced a genius, not indeed of British growth; unpatronized, and at present almost unknown; who may live to astonish, to terrify, and delight all Europe. But true genius is such an uncommon production of nature, and is so much superior to all quackish arts of recommending itself, that when it does appear, it is no wonder that a generation of people without taste do not know it.

Genius may shoot up in a land quite inhospitable to it; it may perhaps even blossom in the most ungenial season. But the rose-bush that displays its blushing honours in the face of the furly uncomfortable east wind, must have sprung from a root of no small vigour. In a certain island, the fostering indulgences and kind attention which the narcissus, the gilly-flower, the tuberose, the Cape jessamin, and all the delicate flowers that adorn the garden, deserve and require; are most absurdly and perniciously bestowed upon ragwort, jack of the hedge, priest's what d'ye call it, bishops weed, bearsfoot, nightshade, and henbane.

SKETCH XXXIV.

THE TASTE OF THE PRESENT AGE.

AMONGST many other distinguishing marks of a stupid age, a bad crop of men, I have been told that the taste in writing was never so false as at present. If it is really so, it may perhaps be owing to a prodigious swarm of insipid trashy writers: amongst whom there are some who pretend to dictate to the public as critics, though they hardly ever fail to be mistaken. But their dogmatic impudence, and something like a scientific air of talking the most palpable nonsense, imposes upon great numbers of people, who really possess a consider-

able share of natural Taste; of which at the same time they are so little conscious, as to suffer themselves passively to be misled by those blundering guides.

A Taste worth cultivating is to be improved and preserved by reading *only* the best writers. But whoever, after perusing a satire of Horace, even in the dullest English translation, can relish the stupid abuse of a blackguard rhymster, may as well indulge the natural depravity of his Taste, and riot for life upon distiller's grains.

But the Taste in writing is not, cannot

not be worse, than it is in music, as well as in all theatrical entertainments. In architecture, indeed, there are some elegant and magnificent works arising, at a very proper time, to restore the nation to some credit with it's neighbours in this article; after it's having been exposed to such repeated disgraces by a triumvirate of awkward clumsy piles, that are not ashamed to shew their stupid heads in the neighbourhood of Whitehall: and one more, that ought to be demolished, if it was for no other reason but to restore the view of an elegant church, which has now for many years been buried alive behind the Mansion House.

It is, indeed, some comfort, that while Taste and Genius happen to be very false and impotent in most of the fine arts, they are not so in all. The arts of gardening, particularly, and the elegant plan of a farm, have of late years displayed themselves in a few spots to greater advantage in England, than perhaps ever before in any part of Europe. This is, indeed, very far from being universal; and some gardens, admired and celebrated still, are so smoothly regular, so over-planted, and so crowded with affected, impertinent, and ridiculous ornaments of temples, ruins, pyramids; obelisks, statues, and a thousand other contemptible whims, that a continuation of the same ground, in it's rude natural state, is infinitely more delightful. You must often have seen fine situations ruined with costly pretences to *improvement*. The most noble and romantic situation of any gardens I have seen, is

near Chesham: and the gentleman who possesses that delightful spot, has shewn great judgment and a true taste, in meddling so little with Nature, where she wanted so little help.

This is one happy instance of an admirable situation, where nature is modestly and judiciously improved; not hurt, by art. An opposite instance of what art, skill, and taste, may produce, without any particular advantages of ground or situation, is most agreeably displayed in the royal gardens at Kew. There you find an extent of flat ground, so easily, agreeably, and unaffectedly broken, that you would think it impossible to alter it but to the worse. To pass without any notice the agreeable and the elegant pieces of architecture, which without crowding adorn those delightful gardens, perhaps there is not a physic-garden in Europe where any botanist can be more agreeably entertained, as to the variety of curious plants. But there is something new, as far as I know, and particularly ingenious here, in the disposition and management of them. Those that naturally delight in the rocks, and the dry hungry soil, are here planted upon ridges of artificial rock-work; where they shew all the luxuriance of vegetation that they could amongst the Alps, the Pyrenees, or the Andes. While a very different tribe, the Aquatics, display themselves in a large cistern, where they are constantly supplied with their best and most natural nourishment, the rain-water, conveyed to them from the eves of the richest green-house I have ever seen,

SKETCH XXXV.

OF THE DRAMATIC UNITIES.

I Suppose few architects will deny that walls, doors, windows, a roof and chimneys, are necessary to a convenient habitation. In my opinion, a strict adherence to the three Unities, as they are established upon the firm foundation of good sense, is not less necessary in the structure of both Tragedy and Comedy; which otherways, especially as represented upon the stage, are irregular, slovenly, blundering, absurd, and improbable. And that even *we* are not shocked at the daily trespasses against them, is owing to custom and Shakespeare. But

it requires so much art to fill up five acts of a play with the business of one single interesting event; without one scene that is not necessary to forward it; without the least change of place; and without exceeding the time of representation; or even the compass of twelve hours, which is permitted by the courtesy of the critics; that it is no wonder most of our dramatic writers affect to despise rules so difficult to practise.

The three great French dramatic poets, Corneille, Racine, and Moliere, have in this article been much more successful

cessful than the English: amongst whom, if you except Ben Johnson in three or four of his capital pieces, I am afraid we shall find very few who have built upon a regular plan; which is exactly the same thing to a play, as composition is to a history in painting. Shakespeare, indeed, without one perfect plan, has perhaps excelled all other dramatic poets as to detached scenes. But he was a wonder!—His deep knowledge of his man nature, his prodigious variety of fancy and invention, and of characters drawn with the strongest, truest, and most exquisite strokes, oblige you to forget his most violent irregularities. However, to compare two stupendous geniuses in different departments; Shakespeare, for this mere disregard of plan, appears less perfect than Raphael; who has heightened the truest and most masterly expressions in his various characters, by

the advantages of a composition the most august and superb imaginable, where it was proper; and always the most elegant, easy, happy, and natural.

The *Samson Agonistes* of Milton was, it seems, recommended by a celebrated prelate to Mr. Pope, as a performance that he might easily mould into a perfect model of Tragedy.—A most desperate task!—For, besides that the dialogue in *Samson* is for the greatest part dry, metaphysical, pedantic, and reads like a starched, laborious, slavish translation from Euripides; I cannot help thinking, with all due deference to Milton and the B—— of Rochester, that the *Samson Agonistes* is no more to a Tragedy, than a long Farce of one act would be to a Comedy. For the stage, if I remember right, is never once cleared of the persons introduced from the first scene to the last.

SKETCH XXXVI.

OF TRAGEDY AND COMEDY.

NOTwithstanding the opinion of some old critic, that a perfect Tragedy is the noblest production of which the human wit is capable; it has long been a subject of learned dispute, whether a perfect Comedy was not the more difficult undertaking of the two. The great majority of judges, who are not always in the right, have, I believe, still given the preference to Comedy in this respect. They tell you, that as Comedy is a representation of common life, and incidents that are exposed to daily observation, it must be a work of more difficult execution; since most people truly are qualified to judge of what is natural in common life. But are we not equally judges of natural expressions in cases of the most tragical distress? even in the most exalted personages? What should hinder?—Do the passions operate differently in similar situations, according to the different ranks of mankind? A king or an emperor may, upon occasion, be as much enraged as a chafed dray-man; only he'll express his anger with more dignity, and in more decent language.

It is, no doubt, equally the business of Tragedy and Comedy to represent life and characters naturally. And we have as good a right to expect true pic-

tures of nature from the one as from the other.

Mean time, I imagine the working up of a good Tragedy to be by many degrees the more difficult and arduous task of the two. Except you think the sublime productions of Raphael required less genius than those of Hogarth; whom I would never be understood to mention but in terms of great esteem and admiration. How many tolerable comedies have we seen for one tragedy; in which the passions are naturally represented, and expressed with propriety and spirit? Mouthings, big words, turgid unnatural language, and affected sentiments, are nothing to the purpose; instead of moving the passions, they only create contempt and disgust in people of proper feelings. I would ask, How many very good comic romances have appeared in the European languages for one tolerable epic poem? Let me ask again, How many excellent comedians of both sexes have appeared upon the English stage, within the memory of many now living, for one that has excelled in Tragedy?

As to what Moliere says upon this subject, I think it is in his *Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes*, it amounts to no more

more than this; that it is much easier to write a bad Tragedy than a good Comedy; which I suppose will be readily granted.

After all, I believe it must be allowed, that a loud, ranting, declamatory Tragedy, in which nature is perpetually kept at the truncheon's end; with the as-

sistance especially of magnificent dresses, changes of amusing scenes, altars, sacrifices, processions, publick audiences of ambassadors, and such other mechanical ornaments as are easily introduced; is much more likely to impose upon the eyes and ears of the multitude, than a cold insipid Comedy.

SKETCH XXXVII.

OF THE CARELESS HUSBAND.

AS the Careless Husband, though it has not appeared upon the stage perhaps once these thirty years, still possesses the first rank amongst our modern comedies, in the opinion of many thousands who have never either read it or seen it represented; I had some time since the curiosity to give it a second perusal; because, when I read it many years ago, I could not conceive how it came to be so particularly admired. And now, it does not by any means strike me as the best even of the few modern English comedies with which I have any acquaintance. Sir Charles, the hero, the fine gentleman of the play, behaves rather brutally, and even with a needless, absurd cruelty, to poor Edging, impertinent as she is. What is still worse; in the tender scene between him and Lady Easy, where all art and insincerity ought to be generously thrown aside, he is disingenuous enough to make a merit of parting with a mistress he was tired of, and from whom he had just disengaged himself. That return of affection to a wife, who was once become indifferent to him, seems hardly natural, to a man at least of Sir Charles's character; and L. Easy has no great reason to depend much upon it. As to L. Betty Modish; such a flippant coquette does not promise at all to be a happy match for such an honest sincere innamorato as L. Love-
more; but I hope he will never trust her

too long out of his sight; not even with his friend and officious match-maker, Sir Charles. In short, Sir Charles is no more than a mere man of pleasure, of great indifference and *non chalance*; much such another as Colley was himself: for I had the honour to be a little acquainted with Mr. Cibber; who, besides his abilities as a writer, and the singular variety of his powers as an actor, was to the last one of the most agreeable, cheerful, and best-humoured men, you would ever wish to converse with. But to return to Sir Charles: the tenderness he expresses in the forementioned scene, shews a change of character too sudden and too violent to be natural; and is contrived only to serve a purpose in the play.

The sudden change of character in Lady Townley, in the Provoked Husband, is not less unnatural than that of Sir Charles Easy. I have good authority for it, that Sir John Vanbrugh, who left the play unfinished, never intended any such reformation. And of all the dramatic poets who have appeared in this century, Vanbrugh seems to have had the truest knowledge of human nature: if you except any, it can be none but Fielding; whose admirable Parody upon the modern English Tragedies, might alone be sufficient to procure him a high rank amongst the Comic Poets.

SKETCH XXXVIII.

OF GLOOMY WRITING.

I Have read so little for many years upon any subject that did not immediately concern the political state of the nation; of which every journeyman wear-

ver, taylor, barber, every porter, chairman, coachman, drayman, carman, shoe-cleaner, and chimney-sweeper, in London, ought to make himself master, for

for the good and safety of the whole; that I am grown quite out of acquaintance with the delights of those writers they call the Classics. But, to recollect some juvenile impressions, I used to think that in the works of the best poets, there is generally an air of cheerfulness and gaiety, wherever their subject in any degree admits of it. The inferior geniuses are either insipidly serene, or, when they affect the serious and sublime, it is heavy, gloomy, and melancholy.

Virgil is like the sun, bright and cheerful. Lucan is a subterraneous vault on fire; and when he wants to breathe the open air, would be the Stygian lake in a storm, if he could. There is such a gloomy solemnity in most of the writers of that age, with whom I have ever had any acquaintance, that you would think the sun had always waded through a sky of blood in the days of those inhuman emperors.

SKETCH XXXIX.

OF A LINE IN LUCRETIVS.

IT cannot be less than thirty years since I have looked into Lucretius; and of the few lines in his elaborate poem that stick to my memory, there is one—

Nempe alia quoque sunt; nempe la sine viximus ante—

that if it was not for other lines and one particular anecdote, would almost tempt one to imagine he had never been in love. What consolation, I beseech you, can it give a lover dying of his wounds, to

tell him—‘There are others as fair as she; and you lived happily enough before you ever saw her.’ Very true; but this is mere sophistry, and nothing at all to the purpose. ‘For,’ says the intoxicated lover, ‘I cannot live without this particular sweet creature: of all the sex, she is the only one that can make me completely happy.’ How soon, after possessing this bewitching angel, he may wish to get rid of her, is a question not much to the purpose at present.

SKETCH XL.

OF THE GOOSE-PHOENIX.

THIS is, perhaps, one of the highest curiosities that has ever appeared even at court, either in bag-wig or tye. But as he is rather out of his place here, and deserves a particular description, I

intend to exhibit him in my Natural History, which I am preparing for the press, under the article of *Strange Birds*.

SKETCH XLI.

OF SINGING.

TALKING of birds—Pray, how d’ye resist the Italian Singers?—Why really not so much as many pretend to do: a great many, a prodigious multitude of all ranks, who resign their own sensations to other people, and dare neither bear nor see for themselves; who dare not even eat or drink for themselves. For my part, I am sincere enough to own, that the Singers at the opera seldom give me much pleasure; and least of all while

they are warbling out a note to the length of a league. Besides that I am in pain for their throats, I feel a contemptuous disgust, and a strange disagreeable sensation of shame both for them and the audience, who never fail to acknowledge those flourishes with the loudest applause. But in almost all Singing, I cannot help lamenting what I think a most material imperfection. A sweet tune, well sung, gives a ravishing grace even

even to lines, that when you come to read them, you are surprized to find how flat and insipid they are, and often how nonsensical. What I complain of is, that few Singers pronounce the words distinctly enough to be understood. They might almost as well sing *Fal al de rat* for ever and ever.

I have reason to suspect, that the most exquisite powers in this way, for want of assurance in those who possess them,

are sometimes lost, and remain quite unknown, except to a few of their most familiar friends. This diffidence is only to be regretted. But I can find no excuse for those volunteers in music, who have got that silly, impertinent, disgusting, provoking habit of humming a tune to themselves in company, my dear honey; and at piquet, cribbage, or quadrille, even at *wibst* itself, sing over their cards.

SKETCH LXII.

OF A VULGAR ERROR.

I Have always considered it as a self-evident absurdity, to imagine that the Scottish tunes were composed by an Italian fiddler. But I own that my opinion upon this subject has begun to totter, ever since it was discovered that the real author of Ossian's Poems was one Korah Sukkubbit, Esq, an idle drunken fellow, who some ten or twelve thousand years ago, lived by making and mending of Jews-harps at the borough of Gomorrah, in the county of Palestine. Good God, how provoking this is!—Bless your ears! the greatest part of the Scotch, Welch, and Irish tunes, were composed long before the Italians, or even the Flemish, knew any thing of music. Excepting Corelli, Pergolesi, and perhaps one or two more distinguishable masters of that charming art, the Italian composers have seldom aspired at any thing beyond mere mechanical harmony; in which any one who has a tolerable ear may succeed. But to express the passions is a different affair: it is one of the great-

est powers that belongs to true genius: which happens to be a very uncommon gift of nature.

Handel was in general a noisy overbearing bully in music: sometimes indeed, but not often, pathetick—yet still charming, as far as mere harmony goes. But it was not in him, still less in David Rizzio, a mere old fiddler, who only executed what other people had composed, to have even imitated, with any success, the Scottish tunes; whether melancholy or gay; whether amorous, martial, or pastoral; in a style highly original, and most feelingly expressive of all the passions, from the sweetest to the most terrible. Who was it that threw out those dreadful wild expressions of distraction and melancholy in *Lady Culroosi's Dream*? an old composition, now, I am afraid, lost, perhaps, because it was almost *too terrible for the ear*. I'll venture to swear that David Rizzio was as innocent as any lamb of all such frantic horrors.

SKETCH XLIII.

OF SOME OTHER VULGAR ERRORS.

SOME people seem to wonder that *Stupidity and Malice* should meet. So far from being opposite qualities, they are, for the most part, husband and wife. And why should you attempt to separate whom the devil has joined?

Even of fools afraid.—Is this a just reproach? Pray, what animal is so troublesome or dangerous as a fool,

whether he is your enemy or your friend?

Why are *Magnanimity and Meekness, Wit and Wisdom*, supposed such extraordinary combinations?—Good sense is surely the solid foundation of true wit: and the truest magnanimity is above all the little turbulence of passion; which is sometimes affected to disguise fear.

F. A bad

A bad heart is by some people supposed almost inseparable from an able head. It is quite the contrary: for where the heart is false, the head is never sound. A fool may be honest; but the most plausible knave never yet possessed a sound understanding. In a word, the less moral a man is, the nearer he approaches to an ass.

Mere vivacity is every day mistaken for wit: and most people, when you talk of a Wit, suppose it a vain, pert, brisk, impudent, ill-natured creature, that says such things as would be pardonable only to an impertinent child. True wit is seldom or never petulant: it would rather suppress even a good joke, than give the least uneasiness to any person that is not a fair object of satire.

A serious disposition and a relish of pleasure are reckoned opposite to one another by the generality of fools; who have not reflection enough to observe that the extasies of pleasure are of all things the most serious. This all sensible women know. The fools of the sex, who are sometimes as voluptuous as their betters, seem often to be out of this secret. But pray who is so grave, or shews such a solemn front, as the husband of the herd? The wether is an insipid whiffing fellow to the ram; whose dignified gravity abates, and becomes less distinguishable, as soon as the genial season is over. And I have been told by some ladies of very good sense and considerable experience, that the grave rake is the man.

SKETCH XLIV.

OF CIVILITY.

A Few days ago, upon accidentally opening an old book, I found the following reflection: 'Incivility is not a vice of the soul, but the effect of many vices; of ridiculous vanity, of ignorance, idleness, stupidity, giddiness, contempt of others, of ill-nature, and jealousy.'

This I take to be a very just and true account of the various ingredients which compose Incivility. As to Civility, if

I am not mistaken, it is an universal duty; all mankind have a natural claim to it from one another, and without it there can be no intercourse in society, but what is disagreeable, shocking, brutish, and dangerous. Every good-natured, generous-spirited person, will practise it for pleasure; every sensible man, whether good natured or not, for his own convenience and quiet.

SKETCH XLV.

SENTENCES, MAXIMS, AND REVERIES.

THERE are many degrees of madness on this side of Bedlam. Those too that stop short of it, are by far the most dangerous kinds of insanity; and it would be much happier for the public, as well as for many individuals, if some people were a little madder than they appear to be.

Most oddities, I apprehend, have a twang of madness in them; though they are often the excess of some good quality.

In education, it is perhaps proper and necessary for young people to be pushed on to many hard and disagree-

able things; especially as they are so often unavoidable in life. Had it depended upon one's own choice, who would have dared to have been born? Good God! to be received into the world by a frightful old woman of either sex! — Hercules himself would have avoided it if he could.

What does a conscience void of all great offences signify to one who torments himself for every little misbehaviour, every inattention, of which absence, hurry, or a hypochondriacal fit of diffidence, may have made him guilty? For one trifling neglect in point

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of good manners, may give more pain of mind to a man of much sensibility, than all the horrible crimes of a most flagitious life ever gave to such a profligate wretch as Cæsar Borgia; whom I take to be the greatest of all modern villains. For the present are still out of the question.

Catiline was but half a villain—He strikes you only with horror. The complete villain affects you at the same time with horror and contempt.

I forget whether it is a reflection of Machiavel's or some other political writer, that the state or empire must go to ruin in a great hurry, whose affairs are conducted by such people as in low life must have belonged to a gang of thieves, or made perhaps some figure amongst the banditti.

The characters that historians give of some eminent persons are not always quite just. Caligula, for instance, has been represented by most of them as a monster of cruelty. For my part, I cannot help considering him as *the best of emperors*; and have always admired the humanity of his wish, that the mob of Rome had but one neck, and himself a good sharp ax to let drop upon it. A tyrant, whose taste in the *virtù* led him to bloody exercises, would naturally have wished that every Roman had at least three heads; that he might never be distressed for want of *game*. Yet, after all, I'm afraid that this good-natured sentiment of Caligula might, by some severe moralist, be imputed rather to indolence than to real humanity: for sometimes, to be sure, *Decipimur specie relictæ*—*We are imposed upon by false appearances of virtue*.

'How!—Caliban turned critic!—
'Which Caliban? for they're a numerous family, bless their sweet bodies! and several of them critics.'—'Lord! I mean the great lubberly sea-calf that was found snoring with open mouth upon the beach after the last spring-tide.'—'O he!—
'Yes, a critic to be sure; and, stupid as you may think him, he may be of excellent use to a reader who has his cue: for he must be read backwards; as the very reverse of his opinions will generally, I don't say always, be just and true.' Most of our present critics, naturally enough put me in mind of an arch thing that a certain witty gentleman said upon a similar occasion: *Optat Ephippia bos tigris*—*The heavy ox would gladly be*

as fine as a horse. Just as if an awkward, clumsy, dancing bear, should be smit with the ambition of shining at the Ridotto.

As there are not perhaps, even in this sensible age, above three or four infallible men in all England; and one of them is sometimes inaccessible from cruel fits of the asthma, and some nasty scorbutick complaints: I should think it best, in all doubtful critical decisive situations, to consult the greatest fool of your acquaintance. And if he advises a voyage to the East Indies, be sure to throw yourself into the first ship that is to sail to Jamaica. I am told that some of the antients used to pay a religious veneration to a certain kind of people; and they must have had some reason for it.

It would be a capital joke to observe how clever and sensible a fool thinks himself; if it was not so very common a sight as it happens to be.

When there is the least time for deliberation, one should never do anything in a hurry. A friend of mine, who does not want for a reasonable share of pride, told me some days ago, that he should never forgive himself for having once, in a fit of absence and fluttering spirits, too readily executed what was proposed, by a very impertinent message which came to him from a pair of people, whom he hardly knew further than by name. Though at the same time it happened to be the very thing he had intended to do; for the sake of avoiding such unreasonable and illiberal reflections as in some situations are naturally to be apprehended from malice or ignorance.

'What d'ye mean by saying always
'*same day, said day*? Can't you say *the same day*, you barbarian? I have
'often heard you say *lay*, where you
'ought to say *lie*. Bless your body!
'Why do you *put always*, instead of
'*always put*, the adverb after the verb?
'It has a vile effect: but you may
'sufficiently flatten your language without it; for it is languid and drawing
'enough at the best. You have got a
'despicable habit, too, of saying *neither this or that*. If you understood even
'the mechanical rules of grammar, you
'would say *neither this, nor that, nor*
'any thing. I suppose you'll set about
'coining new words by and by. But
'depend upon it you'll never make one
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that will find itself *admissible* to the English language. It will *respue* every word that is issued from your mint.—For my part, as it seems hitherto undetermined whether one should say *never* or *ever*, as in the following instance—*If a patriot was ever so active in attempting the ruin of his country*—till this subtle point is decided, I shall sometimes say *ever*, sometimes *never*, just as it happens to suit my ear.

Pray, why don't you roll about in your carriage again, as you did when you were many years younger, and could not so easily afford it as now?

Why, Sir, I am, thank Heaven, very able to walk: and without a great deal of exercise, I can neither eat nor sleep. Besides, Sir, I always hated that jolting over the stones; and every good day, when I envied all foot passengers, I used to grudge myself the expence that either my own or other peoples vanity cost me in that article. Now, whenever it rains, or the streets are dirty, I can command a coach or a chair for a mere trifle.—But at this rate who will employ you?—None. I hope but a few friends, to whom I most devoutly wish perpetual health; and as soon as this life is grown insipid to them, an easy and quick passage to a better; that my tranquillity may never be interrupted by their distress. Nay, you are welcome to laugh at me as long as you please; but my present scheme is to pass the time as agreeably as I can, and to have no more to do with business than is consistent with that scheme.—Well, thou'rt a strange fellow; a most unhappy mixture of ambition, indolence, love of pleasure, and a kind of delicacy very ill calculated to succeed in the scramble of life.—No, I beg your pardon, I am pretty well cured of my ambition. For when I see what sort of geniuses very commonly make no small noise and bustle—But I would not be thought to envy where I have always despised—*Non equidem invidio, miror magis*. Though, after all, there is but little room here for wonder, considering what kind of people constitute the great majority of all ranks in a certain overgrown town; and how even many of them, that in other common affairs are not fools, to avoid the trouble of judging for themselves, often follow the rest in mat-

ters of the utmost consequence to their own precious lives.

Impudence, the thriving son of Stupidity, will make very small talents do great things.

That glaring dim-eyed pug is in such vogue, that though I know him to be, in point of understanding, amongst the most vulgar of the human race; I am almost tempted to impose so strangely upon my own judgment, as to imagine there is something in him.

Pray, who is that facetious gentleman? He can't so much as ask how you do without laughing. He must lead a merry life. D'ye know him?—Upon my word, not I. But I have observed that the dullest people generally laugh the most: from a consciousness, perhaps, of their own insipidity, which they endeavour to disguise by the exercise of laughing.

For Heaven's sake, my dear friend, don't make a trade of laughing. If your aim is to be witty every hour of the day, you'll turn out a teasing, disagreeable companion. When the weather or the company is against you, keep yourself quiet; and never be ashamed to be dull amongst blockheads, let them be never so noisy. In conversation, wit should be accidental; otherwise you must otherwise despise it's vanity and affectation. Meantime, after mangling a joke that has thrown ten or a dozen sensible people into a hearty fit of laughing, don't be so cruel as to doubt whether it really was a joke or not; and to conclude, because you cannot recollect all the circumstances, that the mirth it produced must have been owing to the manner of saying it. Besides, that sometimes a very good joke can hardly be repeated without losing it's spirit; the best jokes, though they are felt immediately by people of proper sensations, are not always easily explained as to the *mode of titillation*, with which they affect the *risible faculty*; except perhaps by some phlegmatic metaphysical connoisseur in wit, who never once felt a good joke in his life.—Pray, what is it that pleases you in the smell of a jonquil, a rose, or gilly-flower? If you're resolved not to enjoy their fragrance till that is explained, you may as well shut up your nose for ever.

I have seen a most unnatural extravagant piece of absurdity received with great

great applause; while flashes of true wit have passed without the least notice.

It is so easy to tickle fools with blasphemy, petulance, and any kind of indecent ribaldry, that these are the common resources of every crazy impudent fellow who would pass for a wit.

You never meet with any impertinence in the company of well-bred people—while you are decent and inoffensive yourself, you have no disagreeable behaviour in any shape to apprehend from them. And the more wit any man has, you will, almost without exception, find him the less apt to be petulant.

There is nothing so provoking as the impertinent compliments of a fool who wishes you well; who shocks you while he thinks he is doing you a pleasure.

It happened, as I have been informed, that several years ago a gentleman, whose name I cannot at present recollect, observed to Mr. T. that Mr. B. though he passed for a man of genius, was rather a hum-drum companion, and seldom said any thing very remarkable. To which Mr. M. told me that Mr. T. replied—'Aye, but he never fails to improve what you say.' This seemed to be performing the part of rather a cold back friend. For I have known Mr. T. shine whole evenings together upon hints, in a manner whispered to him by the foresaid Mr. B.—; while he happened to be either too modest or too indolent to pursue them himself. But a man of ticklish sensations may find it impossible to be happy and in good humour in the company of certain particular people, whom at the same time he may perhaps regard for some good qualities.

I forgot who told me that Mr. T. should once upon a time have asked how a certain gentleman, whose name has slipped through my memory, could possibly be a poet, as he had never once seen a hill. Now I apprehend that Mr. T. must have been misinformed here; for I remember to have met the very gentleman in question one Sunday evening, I think it might have been towards June or July, upon the utmost summit of *Constitution Hill*.

One evening, after the rest of the

company were gone, that most delightful companion Mr. Q. who *should have died hereafter*, told an acquaintance of mine, that in case he outlived him, he would do a friendly office to his memory; and asked him where he would chuse to have his bust set up. 'Any where,' replied the other, after thanking Mr. Q. for the great honour he intended him, 'but in Westminster Abbey.'

To come to an end with anecdotes of this kind. One who had published some things with tolerable success, told me, that his having passed for a poet, had done him more mischief than any sensible person could easily conceive; but at the same time he could not help owning, that it had oftener than once procured him the honour of a bow, in passing along the Strand or Fleet Street, from a gentleman with whom he never had any further acquaintance. I have, oftener than once heard the same person mention one circumstance with particular regret; that he had never been able to discover or guess amongst all his acquaintances, to whom he was obliged for an elegant present, left at his lodgings some years ago by a gentleman who did not leave his name; and to whom, of course, he could not express his due acknowledgments for a favour which he highly values.

'Sir,' says one, 'this piece, even if all the parts could be well performed, would hardly succeed here. It might, perhaps, at Paris; where every one that goes to the play, is as seriously attentive as the most devout people here are to a sermon. But in some places natural and unexaggerated representations of life are not felt; the audience must be kept awake with shew, noise, and bustle. Here the genteeler part of the company are indeed merely *spectators*; they go to see, and display themselves to one another. And what other reasonable motive can they have—considering what kind of entertainment the stage for the most part exhibits at present?'

'I tell you, Sir,' says another upon a different occasion, 'this is stupid, indecent, villainous trash.'—'But have you read it?'—'Yes, above a dozen lines.'—'That's hardly enough; read the whole, and then judge.'—'God forbid!—must I eat whole

'a whole saddle of mutton before I have a right to say it is vile rotten stuff?'

That a writer with very middling and even contemptible parts, may do a great deal more mischief than those of the first abilities can do good, is too evident. How much more successful have a parcel of indecent, profligate, lying, inflammatory scribblers, been of late years, in stupifying, and brutalizing a whole nation; than those elegant, genteel moral-writers, who shone about the beginning of this century, were in refining and polishing it!—But it is much easier to set fire to a palace or a temple, than to white-wash a cottage.

Some of those black-guard geniuses are Poets too, God wot!—With crazy, stupid heads, and bad hearts; without one spark of imagination; without either sense, verification, or language, they are Poets; and the fittest indeed to gain the applause of the vulgar, *great and small; high and low*. For they scribble just such trash as any of the rabble would that could scribble at all. Their works are truly adapted to the meanest capacities. Their poetry is the dullest prose spurred up into an awkward, hobbling ass-trot. Quite opposite to Orpheus, and those *real* poets, whose moral harmony first humanized the woodland

savages, and tamed them into social life, these nightingales of Newgate, these black swans of Fleet Ditch, these infernal screech owls, sing nothing but songs of discord, and sedition, and treason. But not all the rage and fury of the most rancorous hearts can rouse the poetical impotence of those bards to any thing above the insipidity of flat unmannerly abuse, which they and their admirers call satire. However, they cannot last long. One may venture to prophesy a short life, and an infamous memory, to the stupid ditties of all such Poets; and it is an indisputable truth that no Muse ever yet dwelt in the breast of a scoundrel.

Several of these detached Sentences and Reveries were set down as materials for a poetical satire; but as the general run of readers here do not understand verse, except it is so stupid as none but a muse-bit blockhead can possibly write, it is saving some needless pains to send them out in their present shape. So let them go: and if our noble masters the Mobility do not relish them, so much the better. They are the more likely to procure the approbation of those few judges to whose praise alone one would chuse to aspire.

SKETCH XLVI.

A PLAN OF A DEDICATION.

THE late Mr. Cibber addressed the Apology for his Life *To a certain Gentleman*; whereas I LAUNCELOT TEMPLE presume to address my SKETCHES—

TO AN UNCERTAIN GENTLEMAN.

SIR,

I Humbly beg leave to lay the following sheets at your noble and magnificent feet. In an age where scarce any thing but false genius, and the most

impudent quackery in every shape, meets with encouragement, I appeal to *you*, whom I have always deemed *the consummate judge of literary merit*: and I fly in a fluttering hurry to your *protection*. It would offend your modesty, Sir, should I give way to the enthusiasm with which I have constantly admired your amiable behaviour in private life; in the various characters of son, father, brother, husband, uncle, cousin, lover, friend, debtor, creditor, master, &c. &c. together with your *† superlative powers* of

* This compliment was made, several years ago, by a writer of uncommon genius and abilities, in a Dedication to a certain distinguished personage; though some say it has never yet appeared upon what foundation.

† This is one of many news-paper compliments which I am *credibly informed* some *Patriots* from day to day have sily made to the nselves, with great success, amongst a parcel of blind, ignorant, credulous people, who never will learn to smell a rat, but where there is none.

of charming in conversation. But, good God! with what superior brilliancy you shine the * *Cynosure* of State, to guide it's weather-beaten hulk to the port of safety and tranquillity! To your wife, able, frugal, and most strictly economical conduct, throughout the operations of a needless and pernicious war, which to be sure you found unavoidable, it is chiefly owing that your country makes at present such a figure as astonishes all it's neighbours. The raging flames of Vesuvius are a paltry, black-guard, patriotic illumination, compared to it's lustre. You shine, Sir, equally in peace. To your noble perseverance and obstinacy in the cause of liberty and religion, this island owes the firm, steady, manly, administration of it's government, not less wise than virtuous; and the capital of your country ought particularly to thank you for the present state of it's incomparable police. The nice discernment too, and the distinguishing taste you have shewn in patronizing Genius in all it's variety of shapes, is none of your smallest excellencies.—But I beg pardon, Sir; for I am sure you would never forgive me if I should attempt to violate your delicacy with any thing so fulsome as bare-faced praise. Your virtues, Sir, and your fine qualities, are innumerable, and beyond all expression. I could go further; but it would be invidious to say, that in an age most contemptibly weak, and most shockingly wicked, you stand almost alone to support the dignity of human nature.

But as I know, Sir, you despise every thing that looks like flattery; and are too delicate to bear even the justest praise with any degree of patience: to convince you, Sir, that, after all this appearance of compliment, I am no flatterer; and to shew you the sincerity of my friendship—(begging pardon, my most noble and sublime Patron, for the familiarity of the word)—as a sudden squall of praise may easily overset a ves-

sel that perhaps carries more sail than ballast; and, to shift from one metaphor to another, as I should be sorry to give you such an over-dose of a sweet poison as might drive you out of your senses, and make you expose yourself stark naked through the whole town, as mad as any king who holds his residence at either of the palaces in Moorfields; I must be so plain as to tell you, Sir, that I do not as an author solicit your *protection*—Bless your dear sweet *protection*!—If you have any secret to protect stupid writing from the contempt of good judges, keep up your *protection* for some other occasion. It is not impossible that you may, one time or another, be smit with the vanity of turning author yourself. It might happen next moon, if it was not for *Arthur's* or *New-market*.

But shall I at last fairly and honestly present you with a peep of the cloven foot from under the long black gown of dissimulation and hypocrisy!—You shall have it at once, without the least ceremony.—Bless me! did you think me in earnest all this time!—Are you so slow of apprehension, my noble Patron, as not to perceive that the high praises, with which I have at last in a whimsical fit taken it into my head to tickle your ear, are nothing but mere rascally compliments, without the least particle of sincerity?—Is your vanity so irrecoverably blind, as to make it necessary to tell you, that all this is nothing but an exercise in the thriving art of adulation; very fairly practised upon one who has so long fed me with the delicious repast of flattery—for which I have been near the eighth part of a century over head and ears in your debt; and now endeavour to pay you my arrears at once in your own counters.—Mean time, I have the *honour* to be, with the most profound respect and esteem, and the most inviolable attachment, Sir, your most faithful and *superlatively* devoted humble servant,

LAUNCELOT TEMPLE.

* The star called the Dog's Tail.

C O N T E N T S.

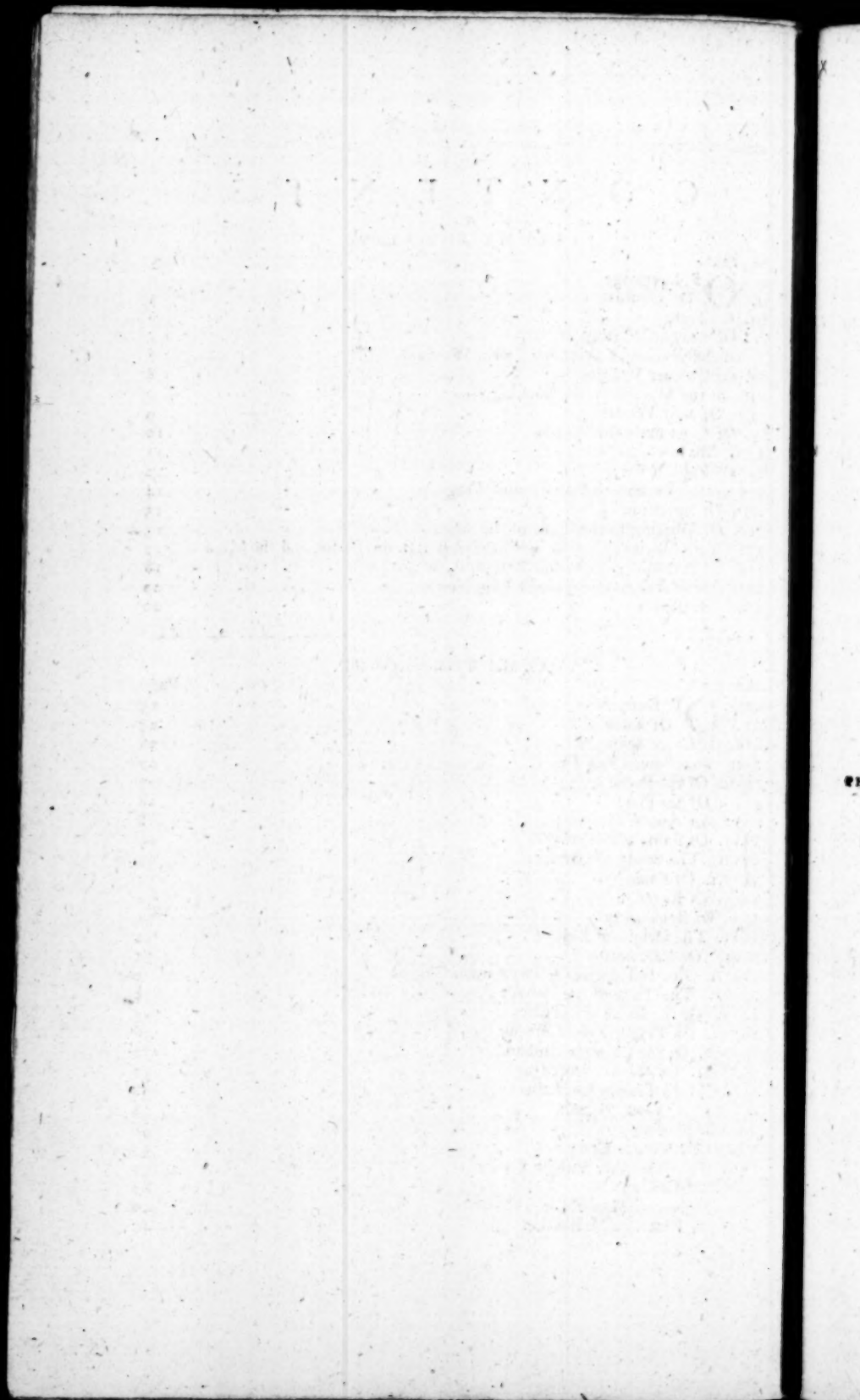
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F I N I S.



HARRISON's COLLECTION.



THE
L O V E R.

WRITTEN

IN IMITATION OF THE TATLER.

BY

MARMADUKE MYRTLE, GENT.

PHYLLIDA AMO ANTE ALIAS: NAM ME DISCEDERE FLAVIT.

VIRO.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WALKER, N^o 16, Rosomans Street.

MDCCXCVII.

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TO
SIR SAMUEL GARTH, M.D.

SIR,

AS soon as I thought of making the *LOVER* a present to one of my friends, I resolved, without farther distracting my choice, to send it *To the best-natured Man*. You are so universally known for this character, that an Epistle so directed would find it's way to you without your name: and, I believe, nobody but yourself would deliver such a superscription to any other person.

This propensity is the nearest akin to Love; and Good-nature is the worthiest affection of the mind, as Love is the noblest passion of it: while the latter is wholly employed in endeavouring to make happy one single object, the other diffuses it's benevolence to all the world.

As this is your natural bent, I cannot but congratulate to you the singular felicity that your profession is so agreeable to your temper. For what condition is more desirable than a constant impulse to relieve the distressed, and a capacity to administer that relief? When the sick man hangs his eye on that of his physician, how pleasing must it be to speak comfort to his anguish, to raise in him the first motions of hope; to lead him into a persuasion that he shall return to the company of his friends, the care of his family, and all the blessings of being!

The manner in which you practise this heavenly faculty of aiding human life, is according to the liberality of science, and demonstrates that your heart is more set upon doing good than growing rich.

The pitiful artifices which empyricks are guilty of to drain cash out of valetudinarians, are the abhorrence of your generous mind; and it is as common with GARTH to supply indigent patients with money for food, as to receive it from wealthy ones for physick. How much more amiable, Sir, would the generosity which is already applauded by all that know you, appear to those whose gratitude you every day refuse, if they knew that you resist their presents lest you should supply those whose wants you know, by taking from those with whose necessities you are unacquainted?

The families you frequent receive you as their friend and well-wisher, whose concern, in their behalf, is as great as that of those who are related to them by the ties of blood and the sanctions of affinity. This tenderness interrupts the satisfactions of conversation, to which you are so happily turned: but we forgive you that our mirth is often insipid to you, while you sit absent to what passes amongst

DEDICATION.

amongst us from your care of such as languish in sickness. We are sensible their distresses, instead of being removed by company, return more strongly to your imagination by comparison of their condition to the jollities of health.

But I forget I am writing a Dedication; and in an address of this kind, it is more usual to celebrate men's great talents, than those virtues to which such talents ought to be subservient: yet where the bent of man's spirit is taken up in the application of his whole force to serve the world in his profession, it would be frivolous not to entertain him rather with thanks for what he is, than applauses for what he is capable of being. Besides, Sir, there is no room for saying any thing to you, as you are a man of wit and a great poet; all that can be spoken that is worthy an ingenuous spirit, in the celebration of such faculties, has been incomparably said by yourself to others, or by others to you. You have never been excelled in this kind, but by those who have written in praise of you: I will not pretend to be your rival even with such an advantage over you; but, assuring you, in Mr. Codrington's words*, that I do not know whether my love or admiration is greater.

I remain,

SIR,

Your most faithful Friend,

And most obliged,

Humble Servant,

RICHARD STEELE.

* Thou hast no faults, or I no faults can spy:
Thou art all beauty, or all blindness I.

Codrington to Dr. Garth before the Dispensary.

THE



THE
L O V E R.

N^o I. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1714.

VIRGINIUS PUERISQUE CANTO.

HOR.

THERE have been many and laudable endeavours of late years, by sundry authors, under different characters, and of different inclinations and capacities, to improve the world, by half-sheet advertisements, in learning, wit, and politics; but these works have not attentively enough regarded the softer affections of the mind, which being properly raised and awakened, make way for the operation of all good arts.

After mature deliberation with myself upon this subject, I have thought, that if I could trace the passion or affection of Love through all its joys and inquietudes, through all the stages and circumstances of life, in both sexes, with strict respect to virtue and innocence, I should, by a just representation and history of that one passion, steal into the bosom of my reader, and build upon it all the sentiments and resolutions which incline and qualify us for every thing that is truly excellent, great, and noble.

All you, therefore, who are in the dawn of life, as to conversation with a faithless and artful world, attend to one who has passed through almost all the mazes of it, and is familiarly acquainted with whatever can befall you in the pursuit of love. If you diligently observe me, I will teach you to avoid the temptations of lawless desire, which leads to shame and sorrow; and carry you into

the paths of Love, which will conduct you to honour and happiness. This passion is the source of our being; and as it is so, it is also the support of it; for all the adventures which they meet with who swerve from Love, carry them so far out of the way of their true being, which cannot pleasingly pass on when it has deviated from the rules of honourable passion.

My purpose, therefore, under this title, is to write of such things only which ought to please all men, even as men; and I shall never hope for prevailing under this character of *Lover*, from my force in the reason offered, but as that reason makes for the happiness and satisfaction of the person to whom I address. My reader is to be my mistress; and I shall always endeavour to turn my thoughts so as that there shall be nothing in my writings too severe to be spoken before one unacquainted with learning, or too light to be dwelt upon before one who is either fixed already in the paths of virtue, or desirous to walk in them for the future.

My assistants, in this work, are persons whose conduct of life has turned upon the incidents which have occurred to them from this agreeable or lamentable passion, as they respectively are apt to call it, from the impression it has left upon their imaginations, and
which

which mingles in all their words and actions.

It cannot be supposed the gentlemen can be called by their real names, in so publick a manner as this is. But the hero of my story, now in the full bloom of life, and seen every day in all the places of resort, shall bear the name of one of our British rivers, which washes his estate. As I design this paper shall be a picture of familiar life, I shall avoid words derived from learned languages, or ending in foreign terminations: I shall shun also names significant of the person's character of whom I talk; a trick used by play-wrights, which I have long thought no better a device than that of under-writing the name of an animal on a post, which the painter conceived too delicately drawn to be known by common eyes, or by his delineation of it's limbs.

Mr. Severn is now in the twenty-fifth year of his age, a gentleman of great modesty and courage, which are the radical virtues which lay the solid foundation for a good character and behaviour both in public and private. I will not, at this time, make the reader any further acquainted with him than from this particular, that he extremely affects the conversation of people of merit, who are advanced in years, and treats every woman of condition, who is past being entertained on the foot of homage to her beauty, so respectfully, that in his company she can never give herself the compunction of having lost any thing which made her agreeable. This natural goodness has gained him many hearts, which have agreeable persons to give with them: I mean, mothers have a fondness for him, and wish that fondness could be gratified by his passion to their daughters. Were you to visit him in a morning, you would certainly find some awkward thing of business, some old steward, or distant retainer to a great family, who has a proposal to make to him, not (you may be sure) coming from the person who sent him, but only in general to know whether he is engaged.

Mr. Severn has at this time patterns sent him of all the young women in town; and I who am of his council in these matters, have read his particulars of women brought him, not from professed undertakers that way, but from those who are under no necessity of selling immediately; but such who have

daughters a good way under twenty, that can stay for a market, and send in their account of the lady, in general terms only: as that she is so old, so tall, worth so much down, and has two bachelor uncles (one a rich merchant) that will never marry; her maiden-aunt loves her mightily, and has very fine jewels, and the like. I have observed in these accounts, when the fortune is not suitable, they subjoin a postscript, she is very handsome; if she is rich and defective as to charms, they add, she is very good.

But I was going to say, that Mr. Severn having the good sense to affect the conversation of those elder than himself, passes some time at a club, which (with himself) consists of five; whom we shall name as follows.

Mr. Oswald, a widower, who has within these few months buried a most agreeable woman, who was his beloved wife; and is indulged by this company to speak of her in the terms she deserved of him, with allowance to mingle family-tales concerning the merit of his children, and the ways and methods he designs to take to support a painful and lonely being, after the loss of this companion, which tempered all his sorrows, and gave new sense and spirit to his satisfactions.

Mr. Mullet, a gentleman, who, in the most plentiful fortune, seems to taste very little of life, because he has lost a lady whom he passionately loved, and by whom he had no children: he is the last of a great house; and though he wants not many months of fifty, is much sought by ladies as bright as any of the sex; but as he is no fool, but is sensible they compare his years with their own, and have a mind to marry him, because they have a mind to bury him, he is as froward, exceptionous, and humour-some, as ever a beauty of them all. I, who am intimate with Mullet as well as Severn, know that many of the same women have been offered to him of fifty, in case of losing him of five and twenty, and some perhaps in hopes of having them both: for they prudently judge, that when Mullet is dead, it may then be time enough for Severn to marry; and a lady's maid can observe, that many an unlikely thing has come to pass, than this view of marriage between her young mistress and both those gentlemen.

Mr.

Mr. Johnson is a gentleman happy in the conversation of an excellent wife, by whom he has a numerous offspring; and the manner of subjecting his desires to his circumstances, which are not too plentiful, may give occasion in my future discourses to draw many incidents of domestic life, which may be as agreeable to the rest of the young men of this nation, as they are to the well-disposed Mr. Severn.

The fourth man of this little assembly is Mr. Wildgoose, an old bachelor, who has lived to the fifty-third year of his age, after being disappointed in love at his twenty-third. That torment of mind frets out in little dissatisfactions and uneasinesses against every thing else, without administering remedy to the ail itself, which still festers in his heart, and would be insupportable, were it not cooled by the society of the others abovementioned. A poor old maid is one, who has long been the object of ridicule; her humours and particularities afford much matter to the facetious; but the old bachelor has ten times more of the splenetic and ridiculous, as he is conversant in larger scenes of life, and has more opportunities to diffuse his folly, and consequently can vex and delight people in more views than an ancient virgin of the other sex.

The fifth and last of this company, is my dear Self, who oblige the world with this work. But as it has been frequently observed, that the fine gentleman of a play has always something in him which is of near alliance to the real character of the author, I shall not pretend to be wholly above that pleasure; but shall, in the next paper, principally talk of myself, and satisfy my readers how well I am qualified to be the secretary of Love. I had ordered my bookseller to adorn the head of my paper with little pretty broken arrows, fans thrown away, and other ensigns armorial of the Isle of Paphos, for the embellishment of my work; but as I am a young author, and pretend to no more but a happy imita-

tion of one who went before me, he would not be at that charge. When I failed there, I desired him only to let the paper be gilded; but he said that was a new thing, and it would be taken to be written *by a person of quality*, which, I know not for what reason, the *Bibliopoles* are also very averse to, and I was denied my second request. However, this did not discourage me, and I was resolved to come out; not without some particular hopes, that if I had not so many admirers, I might possibly have more customers than my predecessor, whom I profess to imitate; for there are many more who can feel what will touch the heart, than receive what would improve the head.

I therefore design to be the comfort and consolation of all persons in a languishing condition, and will receive the complaints of all the faithful sighers in city, town, or country; firmly believing that, as bad as the world is, there are as constant ones within the cities of London and Westminster, as ever wandered in the plains of Arcadia.

I shall in my next paper (as much as I can spare of it from talking of myself) tell the world how to communicate their thoughts to me, which will very properly come in with the description of my apartment, and the furniture of it, together with the account of my person, which shall make up the second paper or chapter, and shall be placed before the *errata* of this. I have nothing further to say now, but am willing to make an end of this leaf as quaintly as possible, being the first; and therefore would have it go off, like an act in a play, with a couplet; but the spirit of that will be wholly in the power of the reader, who must quicken his voice hereabouts, like an actor at his *exit*, helping an empty verse with lively hand, foot, and voice, at once; and if he is reading to ladies, say briskly, that, with regard to the greatest part of mankind—

Foreign is every character beside;

But that of Lover every man has try'd.

No II. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27.

—MENTIS GRATISSIMUS ERROR.

HOR.

I Cannot tell how many years, months, hours, days, or minutes, have passed away since I first saw Mrs. Ann Page; but certain I am, that they have ran by me, without my being much concerned in what was transacted in the world around me all that while. Mrs. Page being a gentlewoman on whom I have ever doated to distraction, has made me very particular in my behaviour upon all the occurrences on this earth, and negligent of those things in which others terminate all their care and study; inso-much, that I am very sensible it is only because I am harmless, that the busy world does not lock me up; for if they will not own themselves mad, they must conclude I am, when they see me cold to the pursuits of riches, wealth, and power; and when people have been speaking of great persons and illustrious actions, I close the whole with something about Mrs. Page, they are apt to think my head turned, as well as I do theirs. However, I find consolation in the simplicity of my distress, (which has banished all other cares) and am reconciled to it. But however I may be looked upon by the silly crowds who are toiling for more than they want, I am, without doubt, in myself, the most innocent of all creatures; and a squirrel in a chain, whose teeth are cut out, is not more incapable of doing mischief. Mrs. Ann Page had such a turn with her neck, when I, thinking no harm, first looked upon her, that I was soon after in a fever, and had like to have left a world which I ever since despised, and been at rest. But as Mrs. Ann's parents complied with her own passion for a gentleman of much greater worth and fortune than myself, all that was left for me was to lament or get rid of my passion by all the diversions and entertainments I could. But I thank Mrs. Ann, (I am still calling her by her maiden name) she has always been civil to me, and permitted me to stand god-father at the baptism of one of her sons.

This would appear a very humble favour to a man of ungoverned desire; but as for me, as soon as I found Mrs.

Ann was engaged, I could not think of her with hope any longer, any other-ways than that I should ever be ready to express the passion I had for her, by civilities to any thing that had the most remote relation to her. But, alas! I am going on as if every body living was acquainted with Mrs. Ann Page and myself, when there is indeed no occasion of mentioning either, but to inform the reader, that it is from the experience of a patient I am become a physician in love. I have been in it thirty years, just as long as the learned Sydenham had the gout; and though I cannot pretend to make cures, I can, like him, put you in a good regimen when you are down in a fit. As I was saying, this affection of mine left behind it a scorn of every thing else; and having an aversion to business, I have passed my time very much in observation upon the force and influence this passion has had upon other men, and the different turns it has given each respective generation, from the cultivation or abuse of it. You will say I fell into very unhappy days for a lover of my complexion, who can be satisfied with distant good-will from the person beloved, and am contented that her circumstances can allow me only her esteem, when I acquaint you that my most vigorous years were passed away in the reign of the amorous Charles the Second. The licences of that court did not only make that love, which the vulgar call romantic, the object of jest and ridicule, but even common decency and modesty were almost abandoned as formal and unnatural. The writers for the stage fell in with the court, and the theatre diffused the malignity into the minds of the nobility and gentry, by which means the degeneracy spread itself through the whole people, and shame itself was almost lost: naked Innocence, that most charming of beauties, was confronted by that most hideous of monsters, barefaced Wickedness.

This made me place all my happiness in hours of retirement; and as great distresses often turn to advantage, I im-

pute

pute it to the wickedness of the age, that I am a great master of the bass-viol.

With this instrument I have passed many a heavy hour, and laid up treasures of knowledge, drawn from contemplation, on what I had seen every day in the world, during the intervals from music and reading, which took up the principal part of my time. My purpose, at present, is to be a knight-errant with the pen, since that order of men who were so with their swords, are quite laughed out of the world. My business is to kill monsters, and to relieve virgins; but as it has been the custom, time out of mind, for knights, who take upon them such laudable and hazardous labours, to have a castle, a moat round it, and all other conveniencies within themselves, it has luckily happened, that the spacious and magnificent apartment, which the ingenious Mr. Powell lately possessed in Covent Garden, has lately been relinquished by him, upon some importunate words and menaces given him by a gentleman who has the sovereignty of it, by virtue of some enchanted rolls of parchment, which convey that mansion unto the said chief commander, vulgarly called a landlord. By this means, you are to understand, that the apartment, wherein the little Kings and Queens lately diverted so many of our nobility and gentry, is now mine. This spacious gallery, for such I have made it for my musings and wanderings of thought, I have dignified with the name of *The Lover's Lodge*, where, under fancied skies, and painted clouds, left by Mr. Powell, I sit and read the true histories of famous knights and beautiful damsels, which the ignorant call romances. To make my walk more gloomy, and adapted both for melody and sadness, there lies before me, at present, a Death's head, my Bass-viol, and the History of Grand Cyrus. I cannot tell by what chance, I have also some ridiculous writers in my study, for I have an aversion for comicks, and those they call pleasant fellows, for they are insensible of love. Those creatures get into a familiarity with ladies, without respect on either side, and consequently can neither see what is amiable, or be the objects of love. I wonder how these buffoons came into my head. But I was going to intimate, that the notions of gallantry are turned topsy-turvy, and the knight-errantry of this profligate

age is destroying as many women as they can. It is notorious, that a young man of condition does no more than is expected from him, if, before he thinks of settling himself in the world, he is the ruin of half a dozen females, whose fortunes are unequal to that which his laborious ancestors, whether successful in virtue or iniquity, have left him.

Thus I every day see innocents abused, scorned, betrayed, and neglected, by brutes, who have no sense of any thing but what indulges their appetites; and can no longer suffer the more charming and accomplished part of the species to want a friend and advocate. I shall enquire, in due time, and make every anti-hero in Great Britain give me an account why one woman is not as much as ought to fall to his share; and shall shew every abandoned wanderer, that with all his blustering, his restless following every female he sees, is much more ridiculous than my constant, imaginary attendance, on my fair-one, without ever seeing her at all.

But the main purpose of this chapter I had like to have slipped over, to wit, the more exact account of my bower. As it is not natural for a man in love to sleep all night, but to be a great admirer of walking, I am at the charge of four tapers burning all night, and take my itinerations, with much gloomy satisfaction, from one end to the other of my long room, my field-bed being too small to interrupt my passage, though placed in the middle of my apartment. No one who has not been polite enough to have visited Mr. Powell's theatre, can have a notion how I am accommodated; but if you will suppose a single man had Westminster Hall for his bed-chamber, and lay in a truckle-bed in the midst of it, it will give you a pretty good idea of the posture in which I dream (but with honour and chastity) of the incomparable Mrs. Page.

My predecessors in knight-errantry, who were, as I above observed, men of the sword, had their lodgings adorned with burnished arms round the cornices, limbs of dried giants over their heads, and all about the moat of their castle, where they walked by moon-light; but as I am a pen-champion, and live in town, and have quite another sort of people to deal with, to wit, the critics, beaux, and rakes of Covent Garden, I have nothing but Italian-dishes, pens and

ink, and paper, on little tables at equal distance, that no thought may be lost as I am musing. I am forced to comply, more than my inclinations and high passions would otherwise permit, and tell the world how to correspond with me, after their own method, in the common way: I am to signify, therefore, that I am more accessible than any other

knights ever were before me, and in plain terms, that there is a coffee-house under my apartment; nay further, that a letter, directed to Mr. Marmaduke Myrtle, at the Lover's Lodge, to be left at Shanley's Coffee-house, Convent Garden, will find the gentlest of mortals, your most enamoured, humble servant.

Nº III. TUESDAY, MARCH 2.

YOUNG NOBLES, TO MY LAWS ATTENTION LEND:
AND ALL YOU VULGAR OF MY SCHOOL, ATTEND.

ART OF LOVE, CONGREVE.

LOVER'S LODGE, MARCH 2.

NOW I have told all the world my name and place of abode, it is impossible for me to enjoy the studious retirement I promised myself in this place. For most of the people of wit and quality who frequented these lodgings in Mr. Powel's time, have been here; and I having a silly creature of a footman, who never lived but with private gentlemen, and cannot stedfastly lie, they all see by his countenance he does not speak truth when he denies me, and will break in upon me. It is an unspeakable pleasure that so many beauteous ladies have made me compliments upon my design to favour and defend the sex against all pretenders without merit, and those who have merit, and use it only to deceive and betray. The principal fair-ones of the town, and the most eminent toasts, have signed an address of thanks to me; and, in the body of it, laid before me some grievances, among which the greatest are the evil practices of a set of persons whom they call in their presentation the *Lovers Vagabond*. There has been, indeed, ever since I knew this town, one man of condition or other, who has been at the head, and giving example to this sort of companions; been the model for the fashion. It would be a vain thing to pretend to property in a country where thieves were tolerated, and it is as much so to talk of honour and decency when the prevailing humour runs directly against them. The *Lovers Vagabond* are an order of modern adventurers, who seem to be the exact opposite to that venerable and chaste fraternity, which were formerly called Knights-errant. As a knight-errant professed the

practice and protection of all virtues, particularly chastity, a *lover vagabond* tramples upon all rights, domestic, civil, human, and divine, to come at his own gratification in the corruption of innocent women. There are sometimes persons of good accomplishments and faculties, who commence secretly *lovers vagabonds*, but though amorous stealths have been imputed by some historians to the wisest and greatest of mankind, yet none but superficial men have ever publicly entered into the list of the *Vagabond*. A *lover vagabond*, considering him in his utmost perfection and accomplishment, is but a seeming man. He usually has a command of insignificant words, accompanied with easy action, which passes among the fillic part of the fair for eloquence and fine breeding. He has a mien of condescension, from the knowledge that his carriage is not absurd, which he pursues to the utmost impudence. He can cover any behaviour, to clothe any idea with words that, to an unskilful ear, shall bear nothing of offence. He has all the sufficiency which little learning and general notices of things give to giddy heads, and is wholly exempt from that diffidence which almost always accompanies great sense and great virtue in the presence of the admired. But the *lover vagabond* loving no woman so much as to be distressed for the loss of her, his manner is generally easy and janty, and it must be from very good sense and experience in life that he does not appear amiable. It happens unfortunately for him, though much to the advantage of those whom I have taken under my care, that the chief of this order, at present among us in Great Britain,

Britain, is but a speculative *debauchée*. He has the language, the air, the tender glance; he can hang upon a look; has most exactly the sudden veneration of face, when he is caught ogling one whose pardon he would beg for gazing; he has the exultation at leading off a lady to her coach; can let drop an indifferent thing, or call her servants with a loudness, and a certain gay insolence, well enough; nay, he will hold her hand too fast for a man that leads her, and is indifferent to her, and yet come to that gripe with such slow degrees, that she cannot say he squeezed her hand, but for any thing further he had no inclination. This chieftain, however, I fear will give me more plague and disturbance than any one man with whom I am to engage, or rather whom I am to circumvent. He is busy in all places; an ample fortune and vigour of life enable him to carry on a shew of great devastation where-ever he comes. But I give him hereby fair warning to turn his thoughts to new entertainments, upon pain of having it discovered, that she is still a virgin upon whom he made his last settlement. The secret, that he is more innocent than he seems, is preferred by great charge and expence on humble retainers and servants of his pleasures. But some of the women, who are above the age of novices, have found him out, and have in a private gang given him the nick-name of the *Blight*, for that they find themselves blasted by him, though they are not sensible of his touch. It was the other day said, at a visit, Mr. Such-a-one, naming the *Blight*, had ruined a certain young lady. 'No,' said a sensible female; 'if she says so, I am sure she wrongs him.' 'He may,' continued she, with an air of a disappointed woman, between rage and laughter, 'hire ruffians to abuse her; but many a woman has come out of the *Blight*'s hands even safer than she wished. I know one to whom, at parting, with a thousand poetical repetitions, and pressing her hands, he vowed he would tell nobody; but the Flirt, throwing out of his arms, answered pertly, "I don't make you the same promise."

Though I shall from time to time display the *Lovers Vagabond* in their proper colours, I here publish an act of indemnity to all females who took them for fine fellows until my writing ap-

peared; that is to say, (for in a public act we must be very clear) I shall not look back to any thing that happened before Thursday the 25th of February last past, that being the first day of my appearance in public.

I expect, therefore, to find, that on that day all vagrant desires took their leave of the cities of London and Westminster.

In order to recover simplicity of manners without the loss of true gaiety of life, I shall take upon me the office of *Arbiter Elegantiarum*. I cannot easily put those two Latin into two as expressive English words; but my meaning is, to set up for a judge of elegant pleasures; and I shall dare to assert, in the first place, (to shew both the discerning and severity of a just judge) that the greatest elegance of delights consists in the innocence of them. I expect, therefore, a seat to be kept for me at all balls, and a ticket sent, that by myself, or a subordinate officer of mine, I may know what is done and said at all assemblies of diversion: I shall take care to substitute none, where I cannot be myself present, who are not fit for the best bred society; in the choice of such deputies, I shall have particular regard to their being accomplished in the little usages of ordinary and common life, as well as in noble and liberal arts.

I have many youths, who, in the intermediate seasons between the terms at the Universities, are under my discipline, after being perfect masters of the Greek and Roman eloquence, to learn of me ordinary things, such as coming in and going out of a room. Mr. Severn himself, whom I now make the pattern of good-breeding, and my top fine gentleman, was with me twice a day for six months upon his first coming to town, before he could leave the room with any tolerable grace: when he had a mind to be going; he never could move without bringing in the words, 'Well, Sir, I find I interrupt you;' or, 'Well, I fear you have other business;' or, 'Well, I must be going.' Hereupon I made him give me a certain sum of money down in hand, under the penalty of forfeiting twenty shillings every time, upon going away, he pronounced the particle *well*. I will not say how much it cost him before he could get well out of the room. Some silly particle or other,

other, as it were to tack the taking leave with the rest of the discourse, is a common error of young men of good education.

Though I have already declared I shall not use words of foreign termination, I cannot help if my correspondents do it. A gentleman, therefore, who subscribes Aronces, and writes to me concerning some regulations to be made among a set of country dancers, must be more particular in his account. His general complaint is, that the men who are at the expence of the ball, bring people of different characters together, and the libertine and innocent are huddled, to the danger of the latter, and encouragement of the former. I have frequently observed this kind of enormity, and must desire Aronces to give me an

exact relation of the airs and glances of the whole company, and particularly how Mrs. Gatty sets, when it happens that she is to pass by the *lover vagabond*, who, I find, is got into that company by the favour of his cousin Jenny. For I design to have a very strict eye upon these diversions; and it shall not suffice, that, according to the author of *The Rape of the Lock*, all faults are laid upon Sylphs; when I make my enquiry, as the same author has it—

What guards the purity of melting maids
In courtly balls and midnight masquerades.
Safe from the treach'rous friend and daring
spark,
The glance by day, and whisper in the dark?
When kind Occasion prompts their warm
desires,
When music softens, and when dancing fires?

Nº IV. THURSDAY, MARCH 4.

THE DANCER JOINING WITH THE TUNEFUL THROG,
ADDS DECENT MOTION TO THE SPRIGHTLY SONG.
THIS STEP DENOTES THE CAREFUL LOVER; THIS,
THE HARDY WARRIOR, OR THE DRUNKEN SWISS.
HIS PLIANT LIMES IN VARIOUS FIGURES MOVE,
AND DIFFERENT GESTURES DIFFERENT PASSIONS PROVE.
STRANGE ART! THAT FLOWS IN SILENT ELOQUENCE,
THAT TO THE PLAC'D SPECTATOR CAN DISPENSE
WORDS WITHOUT SOUND, AND, WITHOUT SPEAKING, SENSE. }
WEAVER'S HISTORY OF DANCING.

THE great work which I have begun for the service of the more polite part of this nation, cannot be supposed to be carried on by the invention and industry of a single person only: it is, therefore, necessary that I invite all other ingenious persons to assist me. Considering my title is *The Lover*, and that a good air and mien is (in one who pretends to please the fair) as useful as skill in all or any of the arts and sciences, I am mightily pleased to observe, that the art of Dancing is, of late, come to take rank in the learned world, by being communicated in letters and characters, as all other parts of knowledge have for some ages been. I shall desire all those of the faculty of Dancing, to write me, from time to time, all the new steps they take in the improvement of the science. I this morning read, with unspeakable delight, in *The Evening Post*, the following advertisement—

On Tuesday last was published, *The Bretagne, a French Dance*, by Mr. Pecour, and writ by Mr. Siris; engraven in Characters and Figures, for the use of Masters. Price 2s. 6d. Note, Mr. Siris's Ball Dances are likewise printed, and his original Art of Dancing by Characters and Figures. All sold by J. Walsh, at the Harp and Hautboy, in Catharine Street in the Strand.

Take this Dance in it's full extent and variety, it is the best I ever read; and though Mr. Siris, out of modesty, may pretend that he has only translated it, I cannot but believe, from the stile, that he himself writ it; and, if I know any thing of writing, he certainly penned the last *coupée*. This admirable piece is full of instruction; you see it is called the Bretagne, that is to say, the Britain. It is intended for a festival entertainment, (like Mr. Bays's Grand Dance) that,

that, upon occasion of the peace with France and Spain, the whole nation should learn a new Dance together. Some of the best experienced persons in French dancing are to practise it at the Great Room in York Buildings; where, it seems, the Master of the Revels lives. He, as it is usual, carries a white wand in his hand, and, at a motion made with it to the music, the dance is to begin. I am credibly informed that, out of respect, and for distinction-sake, he has ordered, that the first person who shall be taken out, is to be the Censor of great Britain. I do not think this at all unlikely, nor below the gravity of that sage; for it is well known, the judges of the land dance the first day of every term, and it is supposed, by some, they are to dance next after the Censor.

Mr. Siris has made the beginning of this movement very difficult for any one who has not, from his natural parts, a more than ordinary qualification that way. The Dance is written in the genius required by Mr. Weaver, in his History of Dancing. 'The ancients,' says that more than peripatetic philosopher, Mr. Weaver, 'were so fond of dancing, that Pliny has given us 'Dancing Islands; which passage of Pliny, Cælius Rodiginus quotes. 'There is also an account,' says he, 'that in the Torrebian Lake, which is also called the Nymphæan, there are certain islands of the Nymphs, which move round in a ring at the sound of the flutes, and are therefore called the Calamine Islands, from Calamus, a pipe or reed; and also the Dancing Islands, because at the sound of the symphony, they were moved by the beating of the feet of the fingers.'

I appeal to all the learned etymologists in Great Britain, whether it is possible to assign a reason for calling this grand Dance The Britain, if the French did not think to make this a dancing island. The title of Mr. Siris is apparently political, as any judicious reader will find, if he peruses his Siciliana,

which was writ to instruct another dancing island, taught by the French. Let any man who has read Machiavel, and understands dancing characters, cast an eye on Mr. Siris's second page. It is intitled—The Siciliana, Mr. Siris's New Dance for the Year 1714. Mr. Siris a native of France, you may be sure, sees farther into the French motions for the ensuing year than we heavy Englishmen do, or he would never say it was made for that more than any other year, for all authors believe their works will last every year after they are written to the world's end. I take it for a fly satire upon the awkward imitations of all nations which have not yet learned French dances, that the very next page to the Siciliana is called the *Baboon's Minuet*. Then, after that again, to intimidate the people who won't learn from the French, he calls the next the *Dragoon's Minuet*. I wish all good Protestants to be aware of this movement; for they tell me that, when it is teaching, a Jesuit, in disguise, plays on the kit.

But I forget that this is too elaborate for my character. All that I have to say to the matter of Dancing is only as it regards lovers; and, as I would advise them to avoid dabbling in politics, I have explained these political dances, that the motions we learn may never end in warlike ones; like those which were performed by the ancients with clashing of swords, described by Mr. Weaver (in the above-mentioned history) out of Claudian—

Here, too, the warlike dancers blest our
fight,
Their artful wand'ring, and their laws of
flight,

An unconfus'd return and inoffensive fight.
Soon as the master's blow proclaims the prize,
Their moving breasts in tuneful changes rise,
The shields salute their sides, or straight are
shown

In air with waving, deep their targets groan,
Struck with alternate swords, which thence
rebound,

And end the concert, and the sacred sound.

N^o V. SATURDAY, MARCH 6.

—MY SOUL'S FAR BETTER PART,
CEASE WEEPING, NOR AFFLICT THY TENDER HEART.
FOR WHAT THY FATHER TO THY MOTHER WAS,
THAT FAITH TO THEE, THAT SOLEMN VOW I PASS.

ART OF LOVE, CONGREVE.

AS I have fixed my stand in the very centre of Covent Garden, a place for this last century particularly famed for wit and love; and am near the play-house, where one is represented every night by the other; I think I ought to be particularly careful of what passes in my neighbourhood; and, as I am a professed knight-errant; do all that lies in my power to make the charming endowment of wit, and the prevailing passion of love, subservient to the interests of honour and virtue. You are to understand, that having yesterday made an excursion from my lodge, there passed by me, near St. James's, the charmer of my heart. I have, ever since her parents first bestowed her, avoided all places by her frequented; but accident once or twice in a year brings the bright phantom into my sight, upon which there is a flutter in my bosom for many days following: when I consider, that during this emotion I am highly exalted in my being, and my every sentiment improved by the effects of that passion; when I reflect, that all the objects which present themselves to me, now are viewed in a different light from that in which they had appeared, had I not lately been 'exhilarated by her presence; in fine, when I find in myself so strong an inclination to oblige and entertain all whom I meet with, accompanied with such a readiness, to receive kind impressions of those I converse with; I am more and more convinced, that this passion is in honest minds the strongest incentive that can move the soul of man to laudable accomplishments. Is a man just? let him fall in love, and grow generous. Is a man good-natured? let him love, and grow public spirited. It immediately makes the good which is in him shine forth in new excellencies, and the ill vanish away without the pain of contrition, but with a sudden amendment of heart. This sort of passion, to produce such effects, must necessarily be conceived towards a modest and virtuous

woman; for the arts to obtain her must be such as are agreeable to her, and the lover becomes immediately possessed with such perfections or vices, as make way to the object of his desires. I have plenty of examples to enforce these truths, every night that a play is acted in my neighbourhood: the noble resolutions which heroes in tragedy take, in order to recommend themselves to their mistresses, are no way below the consideration of the wisest man; yet, at the same time, instructions the most probable to take place in the minds of the young and inconsiderate. But, in our degenerate age, the poet must have more than ordinary skill to raise the admiration of the audience so high, in the more great and public parts of his drama, to make a loose people attend to a passion which they never, or that very faintly, felt in their own bosoms. That perfect piece, which has done so great honour to our nation and language, called Cato, excels as much in the passion of it's lovers as in the sublime sentiments of it's hero; their generous love, which is more heroic than any concern in the chief characters of most dramas, makes but subordinate characters in this.

When Marcia reproves Juba for entertaining her with love in such a conjuncture of affairs, wherein the common cause should take place of all other thoughts, the prince answers in this noble manner:

—Thy reproofs are just,
Thou virtuous maid! I'll hasten to my troops,
And fire their languid souls with Cato's virtue.
If e'er I lead them to the field, when all
The war shall stand ranged in it's just array,
And dreadful pomp; then will I think on thee!

O, lovely maid, then will I think on thee!
And in the shock of charging hosts, remember

What glorious deeds should grace the man
who hopes

For Marcia's love.

It has been observable, that the stage in all times has had the utmost influence on the manners and affections of mankind; and as those representations of human life have tended to promote virtue or vice, so has the age been improved or debauched. I doubt not but the frequent reflections upon marriage and innocent love, with which our theatre has long abounded, have been the great cause of our corrupt sentiment in this respect. It is not every youth that can behold the fine gentleman of the comedy represented with a good grace, leading a loose and profligate life, and condemning virtuous affection as insipid, and not be secretly emulous of what appears so amiable to a whole audience. These gay pictures strike strong and lasting impressions on the fancy and imagination of youth, and are hardly to be erased in riper years, unless a commerce between virtuous and innocent lovers be painted with the same advantage, and with as lovely colours, by the most masterly hands on the theatre. I have said masterly hands, because they must be such who can run counter to our natural propensity to inordinate pleasure; little authors are very glad of applause purchased any way; loose appetites and desires are easily raised; but there is a wide difference between that reputation and applause which is obtained from our wantonness, and that which flows from a capacity of stirring such affections which upon cool thoughts contribute to our happiness.

But I was going to give an account of the exultation which I am in, upon an accidental view of the woman whom I had long loved, with a most pure, though ardent passion; but as this is, according to my former representations of the matter, no way expedient for her to indulge me in, I must break the force of it by leading a life suitable and analogous to it, and making all the town sensible how much they owe to her bright eyes which inspire me in the performance of my present office, in which

I shall particularly take all the youth of both sexes under my care.

The two theatres, and all the polite coffeehouses, I shall constantly frequent, but principally the coffee-house under my lodge, Button's, and the play-house in Covent-Garden. But as I set up for the judge of pleasures, I think it necessary to assign particular places of resort to my young gentlemen as they come to town, who cannot expect to pop in at Mr. Button's on the first day of their arrival in town. I recommend it, therefore, to young men, to frequent Shanley's some days before they take upon them to appear at Button's. I have ordered, that no one look in the face of any new comer; and taken effectual methods that he may possess himself of any empty chair in the house without being stared at; but forasmuch as some, who may have been in town for some months together heretofore, by long absence have relapsed from the audacity they had arrived at into their first bashfulness and rusticity. I have given them the same privilege of obscure entry for ten days. I have directed also, that books be kept of all that passes in town in all the eminent coffee-houses, that any gentleman, though just arrived out of exile from the most distant counties in Great Britain, may as familiarly enter into the town-talk as if he had lodged all that time in Covent-Garden; but above all things I have provided, that proper houses for bathing and cupping may be ready for those country gentlemen whose too healthy visages give them an air too robust and importunate for this polite region of lovers, who have so long avoided wind and weather, and have every day been outstripped by them in the ground they have passed over by several miles. As to the orders under which I have put my female youth at assemblies, opera's, and plays, I shall declare them in a particular chapter, under the title of, 'The Government of the Eye in Publick Places.'

THE LOVER.

N^o VI. TUESDAY, MARCH 9.

ON ROWS OF HOMELY TURF THEY SAT TO SEE,
CROWN'D WITH THE WREATHS OF EVERY COMMON TREE.
THERE, WHILE THEY SIT IN RUSTIC MAJESTY,
EACH LOVER HAS HIS MISTRESS IN HIS EYE.

ART OF LOVE.

CORRESPONDENTS begin to grow numerous; and indeed I cannot but be pleased with the intelligence which one of them sends me, for the novelty of it. The gentleman is a very great antiquary, and tells me he has several pieces by him, which are letters from the Sabine virgins to their parents, friends, and lovers, in their own country, after the famous rape which laid the foundation of the Roman people. He thinks these very proper memorials for one who writes an history under the title of Lover. He has also answers to those letters, and pretends Ovid took the design of his Epistles from having had these very papers in his hands. This, you'll say, is a very great curiosity; and for that reason I have resolved to give the reader the following account, which was written by a Sabine lady to her mother, within ten days after that memorable mad wedding; and is as follows:

DEAR MOTHER,

THIS is to acquaint you, that I am better pleased with a very good-natured husband in this little village here of Rome, than ever I was in all the state and plenty at your house. When he first seized me, I must confess he was very rough and ungentle, but he grows much tamer every day than other, and I do not question but we shall very soon be as orderly and sober a couple as you and my father. My cousin Lydia nobody knows of certainly, but the poor girl had two or three husbands in the rout, and as she is very pretty, they say all contend for her still. Romulus has appointed a day to fix the disputed marriages; but it is very remarkable, that several can neither agree to live together, or to part; for if one proposes it, that is taken so mortally ill, that the other will insist upon staying, at least till the other consents to stay; and then the party who denied demands a di-

vorce, to be revenged of the same inclination in the other: thus they say they cannot consent to cohabit till they are upon an equality in having each refused the other. This you must believe will make a great perplexity; but Romulus, who expects a war, will have great regard to let none who do not like each other stay together; and makes it a maxim, that a robust race is not to be expected to descend from wranglers. Pray let me know how my lover, who proposed himself to you, bears the loss of me. I must confess, I could not but resent his being indifferent on this occasion, after all the vows and protestations he made when you left us together. I don't question but he will make jests upon the poverty of the Romans; but they threaten here, that if you are not very well contented with what has passed, they will make you a visit with swords in their hands, and demand portions with your daughters. When I was made prize by my good man, who is remarkably valiant, (for which reason they left me undisputed in his hands) he soon took off my first terrors from my observation of that his pre-eminence, and a certain determinate behaviour, with a dying fondness that glowed in his eyes. I told him, from what I saw other people suffer, I could not but think my lot very fortunate, that I had fallen into his hands; and begged of him he would indulge my curiosity in going with me to some eminence, and observe what befel the rest of my friends and countrywomen. He did so, and from the place we stood on I observed what passed in all the hurly-burly, he observing to me the quality and merit of the husbands, I giving to him an account of the wives. How strangely truth will out! Hispulla, as I saw, when they were struggling for her, has crooked legs; Chloe laughed so violently when she was carried off, that I ob-

served

served her lover, as pretty as she is, hardly thought it a purchase; while Dictynna, as homely as she is, by muffing her face and shrieking, was contended for by twenty rivals. That arch creature Flora has escaped by offering herself: as soon as she perceived what was intended, she got upon a little hillock, and cried out, 'Who will have me? who will have me? Here I am; come, take me.' This forwardness made every man think her a common woman, and the flirt is now safe under the protection of Romulus, as a woman not yet disposed of; but when her character and innocence is known, it is thought she will fall to the lot of Marcius, for his generous behaviour to Thalestrina, who you know was betrothed to Cincinnatus. Marcius and Cincinnatus have long been mortal enemies, and met each other in skirmishes of our different nations, wherein sometimes one, sometimes the other, has been successful. This noble virgin, whose beauty and virtue distinguished her above all the Sabine youth, fell into the hands of Marcius. Our apartments here are not very lofty; and arbours and grottoes, strewed with rushes, herbage, and flowers, make up the best bridal beds among the Romans: to such an abode as this Marcius dragged the lovely Thalestrina. This people are not polite enough, especially on this occasion, to express their passion by civility and ceremonious behaviour. When Thalestrina was convinced of Marcius's immediate purpose, she fell into a swoon at his feet, and with a sigh in her fall cried, 'Oh, Cincinnatus!'

Marcius, at the suddenness of the accident, and the name of his enemy and rival for military glory, was surprised with many different passions and resentments, which all ought to have given way to the care of Thalestrina; but in a nation of men only, and on the first day wherein they had a woman in their commonwealth, he was much at a loss how to be assiduous to her; but as he saw life revive in her, nature and good sense dictated rather to absent himself, than be present at the many distortions of her person in coming to herself. He retired, but entered the place again when he thought she might be enough recovered to be capable of receiving what he had to say to her,

He approached as she leaned against a tree which supported the bower, and delivered himself in these terms.

'Madam, the passion you were lately in, your noble form, and the person you called upon in your distress, give me to understand you are Thalestrina. I am Marcius, and have no debate with Cincinnatus, but on account of glory: were he a stranger to me, your passion for him should secure you; were he my friend, you should command all in my power, in spite of all the charms I see in you; and as he is my enemy, I scorn to wound him in a circumstance wherein he is not capable of making a defence. You have common humanity, and the generosity of an enemy for your safeguard. I will return you to Cincinnatus; and I see by the beautiful gratitude which I now read in your face, you will represent this conduct to the advantage of the Romans, of whom there is not one who does not sacrifice his private passions to the service of his country. I assure you, I know not whether it is more beholden to me this day for the offering which I make of my anger, or my love.'

He did not put her to the pain of long acknowledgments of so great a bounty as that of her very self, but conducted her into the presence of Romulus, and told him, with a very joyous air, he had resigned a fine woman from his bed, to purchase a brave man to his country.

I know Cincinnatus so well, that I doubt not but he will be a friend to Rome, and interpose his good offices for a piece between us and the Sabines. I hope all will join in the same mediation, who have children here; for I already know not to which party my heart would wish success, if a war should ensue; for I find a wife is no longer a daughter, or any other name which comes in competition with that relation: but hope things will so end, that I may have the pleasure to be the faithful consort of an honest man, without interfering with any other character, especially that of,

Madam,

Your dutiful child,

MIRAMANTIS.

N° VII. THURSDAY, MARCH II.

—HABET ET SUA CASTRA CUPIDO.

OVID.

THE BATTLE OF EYES.

IT has been always my opinion, that a man in love should address himself to his mistress with passion and sincerity; and that if this method fails, it is in vain for him to have recourse to artifice or dissimulation, in which he will always find himself worsted, unless he be a much better proficient in the art than any man I have yet been acquainted with.

The following letter is a very natural exemplification of what I have here advanced. I have called it *The Battle of Eyes*, as it brought to my mind several combats of the same nature, which I have formerly had with Mrs. Ann Page,

SWEET MR. MYRTLE,

I Have for some time been solely smitten by Mrs. Lucy, who is a maiden lady in the twenty-eighth year of her age. She has so much of the coquette in her, that it supplies the place of youth, and still keeps up the girl in her aspect and behaviour. She has found out the art of making me believe that I have the first place in her affection, and yet so puzzles me by a double tongue, and an ambiguous look, that about once a fortnight I fancy I have quite lost her. I was the other night at the opera, where seeing a place in the second row of the Queen's box kept by Mrs. Lucy's liver, I placed myself in the pit directly over-against her footman, being determined to ogle her most passionately all that evening. I had not taken my stand there above a quarter of an hour, when *Enter Mrs. Lucy*. At her first coming in, I expected she would have cast her eye upon her humble servant; but, instead of that, after having dropped curtsy after curtsy to her friends in the boxes, she began to deal her salutes about the pit in the same liberal manner. Although I stood in the full point of view, and, as I thought, made a better figure than any body about me, she slid her eye over me, curtsied to the right and to the left, and would not see me for the space of three minutes. I fretted inwardly to

find myself thus openly affronted on every side, and was resolved to let her know my resentments by the first opportunity. This happened soon after; for Mrs. Lucy looking upon me, as though she had but just discovered me, she began to sink in the first offer to a curtsy; upon which, instead of making her any return, I cocked my nose, and stared at the upper gallery; and immediately after raising myself on tiptoe, stretched out my neck, and bowed to a lady who sat just behind her. I found, by my coquette's behaviour, that she was not a little nettled at this my civility, which passed over her head. She looked as pale as ashes, fell a talking with one that sat next her, and broke out into several forced smiles and fits of laughter, which I dare say there was no manner of occasion for. Being resolved to push my success, I cast my eye through the whole circle of beauties, and made my bow to every one that I knew, and to several whom I never saw before in my life. Things were thus come to an open rupture, when the curtain rising, I was forced to face about. I had not sat down long, but my heart relented, and gave me several girds and twitches for the barbarous treatment which I had shewn to Mrs. Lucy. I longed to see the act ended, and to make reparation for what I had done. At the first rising of the audience, between the acts, our eyes met; but as mine began to offer a parley, the hard-hearted slut conveyed herself behind an old lady, in such a manner, that she was concealed from me for several moments. This gave me new matter of indignation, and I began to fancy I had lost her for ever. While I was in this perplexity of thought, Mrs. Lucy lifted herself up from behind the lady who shadowed her, and peeped at me over her right-shoulder. 'Nay, Madam,' thinks I to myself, if those are your tricks, I will 'give you as good as you bring:' upon which I withdrew in a great passion, behind a tall broad-shouldered fellow, who was very luckily placed before me. I here lay *incog.* for at least three seconds;

sends; *Sang* was the word; but being very uneasy in that situation, I again emerged into open candle-light, when looking for Mrs. Lucy, I could see nothing but the old woman, who screened her for the remaining part of the interlude. I was then forced to sit down to the second act, being very much agitated and tormented in mind. I was terribly afraid that she had discovered my uneasiness, as well knowing, that if she caught me at such an advantage, she would use me like a dog. For this reason I was resolved to play the indifferent upon her at my next standing up. The second act, therefore, was no sooner finished, but I fastened my eye upon a young woman who sat at the further end of the boxes, whispering, at the same time, to one who was near me, with an air of pleasure and admiration. I gazed upon her a long time, when stealing a glance at Mrs. Lucy, with a design to see how she took it, I found her face was turned another way, and that she was examining, from head to foot, a young well-dressed rascal who stood behind her. This cut me to the quick; and, notwithstanding I tossed back my wig, rapped my snuff-box, displayed my handkerchief, and at last cracked a jest with an orange-wench to attract her eye, she persisted in her confounded ogle, till Mrs. Robinson came upon the stage to my relief. I now sat down sufficiently mortified; and determined, at the end of the opera, to make my submission in the most humble manner. Accordingly, rising up, I put on a sneaking penitential look; but, to my unspeakable confusion, found her back turned upon me.

I had now nothing left for it but to

make amends for all by handing her to her chair. I bustled through the crowd, and got to her box-door as soon as possible, when, to my utter confusion, the young puppy, I have been telling you of before, bolted out upon me with Mrs. Lucy in his hand. I could not have started back with greater precipitation if I had met a ghoul. The malicious gipsy took no notice of me; but turning aside her head, said something to her dog of a gentleman-usher, with a smile that went to my heart. I could not sleep all night for it, and the next morning writ the following letter to her.

MADAM,

I Protest I meant nothing by what passed last night, and beg you will put the most candid interpretation upon my looks and actions; for however my eyes may wander, there is none but Mrs. Lucy who has the entire possession of my heart. I am, Madam, with a passion that is not to be expressed either by looks, words, or actions, your most unalikeable, and most humble servant,

TOM WHIFFLE.

And now, Sir, what do you think was her answer? Why, to give you a true notion of her, and that you may guess at all her curried tricks by this one.—Here it is.

MR. WHIFFLE,

I Am very much surprized to hear you talk of any thing that passed between us last night, when, to the best of my remembrance, I have not seen you there three days. Your servant,

L. T.

Nº VIII. SATURDAY, MARCH 13.

LINQUENDA TELLUS ET DOMUS ET PLACENS UXOR.

HOR.

IN the calculation of a man's happiness in life, there is no one circumstance which ought more carefully to be considered, than the object of one's love. As that will certainly take full possession of the heart, except it be resisted in time, it is the utmost madness to let your affections fix where you cannot expect the approbation of your reason. If a man does not take this precaution, his days

will pass away with frivolous pleasures and solid vexations; his own reflections only must soften his misfortunes and afflictions; but he can have no recourse, no help from his cooler thoughts, who dare not admit his reason into his council. We cannot look back upon the pleasures which flow from loose desire, but with remorse and contrition, and therefore the mind cannot recur to them

them on occasions of distress, to borrow comfort; but honourable love, though it has all the softness and tenderness which imagination can form, can be admitted under the severest affliction, and is the best instrument to break the force; but as it breaks the force of sorrow, it does not do it by wholly removing it's affliction, but rather by diversifying it. He that is under any great calamity, loses the sense of it, as it touches himself; and his affliction, which, perhaps, would have had in it the terrors of fear and shame, is, by the neglect of his own part in the affair, turned only into pity and compassion for a tender wife who participates it. This kind of concern carries an antidote to it's poison; and the merit of her regard to him has something in it so pleasing, that the soul feels a secret consolation in the happiness of being possessed of such a companion, at the same time that he thinks her participation is the greatest article of his distress. In all ages men who have differed from the sentiments of the world, when they have been precipitated by fury and party, and been sacrificed to the rage of their enemies, have, in trials of this sort, sunk under their distresses, or behaved themselves decently in them, according to the support which they have met with from the domestic partners of their affliction. This is an opportunity to vent the secret pangs of heart to one whose love makes nothing ungrateful; or, to utter the sense of injuries, where that appears conscious virtue, which to any other audience would sound like pride and arrogance.

There are indeed very tender things to be recited from the writings of poetical authors, which express the utmost tenderness in an amorous commerce; but indeed I never read any thing which, to me, had so much nature and love, as an expression or two in the following letter; but the reader must be let into the circumstance of the matter to have a right sense of it. The epistle was written by a gentlewoman to her husband, who was condemned to suffer death. The unfortunate catastrophe happened at Exeter in the time of the late rebellion. A gentleman, whose name was Penruddock, to whom the letter was written, was barbarously sentenced to die without the least appearance of justice. He asserted the illegality of his enemies proceedings with a spirit wor-

thy his innocence; and the night before his death, his lady writ to him the letter which I so much admire, and is as follows.

MRS. PENRUDDOCK'S LAST LETTER
TO HER HUSBAND.

MY DEAR HEART,

MY sad parting was so far from making me forget you, that I scarce thought upon myself since, but wholly upon you. Those dear embraces which I yet feel, and shall never lose, being the faithful testimonies of an indulgent husband, have charmed my soul to such a reverence of your remembrance, that, were it possible, I would, with my own blood, cement your dead limbs to life again; and (with reverence) think it no sin to rob Heaven a little while longer of a martyr. Oh, my dear! you must now pardon my passion, this being my last (oh fatal word!) that ever you will receive from me; and know, that until the last minute that I can imagine you shall live, I will sacrifice the prayers of a Christian, and the groans of an afflicted Wife. And when you are not, (which sure by sympathy I shall know) I shall wish my own dissolution with you, that so we may go hand in hand to Heaven. 'Tis too late to tell you what I have, or rather have not done for you; how turn'd out of doors because I came to beg mercy; the Lord lay not your blood to their charge! I would fain discourse longer with you, but dare not; passion begins to drown my reason, and will rob me of my *devoir*, which is all I have left to serve you. Adieu, therefore, ten thousand times, my dearest dear; and since I must never see you more, take this prayer: may your faith be so strengthened, that your constancy may continue, and then I know Heaven will receive you; whither grief and love will in short time (I hope) translate, my dear, your sad, but constant wife, even to love your ashes when dead,

ARUNDEL PENRUDDOCK.

MAY 3d, 1655, 11 AT NIGHT.

Your children beg your blessing and present their duties to you.

I do not know that I have ever read any thing so affectionate as that line—
'Those dear embraces which yet I feel.'
Mr. Penruddock's answer has an equal tenderness,

tenderness, which I shall recite also, that the town may dispute whether the man or the woman expressed themselves the more kindly, and strive to imitate them in less circumstances of distress; for from all, no couple upon earth are exempt.

MR. PENRUDDOCK'S LAST LETTER
TO HIS LADY.

DEAREST, BEST OF CREATURES!

I had taken leave of the world when I received yours: it did at once recal my fondness for life, and enable me to resign it. As I am sure I shall leave none behind me like you, which weakens my resolution to part from you; so, when I reflect I am going to a place where there are none but such as you, I recover my courage. But fondness breaks in upon me; and as I would not have my tears flow to-morrow, when your

husband, and the father of our dear babes, is a public spectacle; do not think meanly of me, that I give way to grief now in private, when I see my land run so fast, and I within a few hours am to leave you helpless, and exposed to the merciless and insolent, that have wrongfully put me to a shameful death, and will object that shame to my poor children. I thank you for all your goodness to me; and will endeavour so to die, as to do nothing unworthy that virtue in which we have mutually supported each other, and for which I desire you not to repine that I am first to be rewarded: since you ever preferred me to yourself in all other things, afford me, with cheerfulness, the precedence in this.

I desire your prayers in the article of death, for my own will then be offered for you and yours.

J. PENRUDDOCK.

N^o IX. TUESDAY, MARCH 16.

QUANTA LABORAS IN CHARYBIDI!

HOR.

UPON my opening the Lover's Box this morning, I found nothing in it but the following letter, made up very nicely, and sealed with a little Cupid holding a flaming heart in each hand, and circumscribed, *Love unites us*. I find, by the contents of this letter, that my correspondent will soon change his device, and perhaps make the figure of Hymen perform that part which, at present, he has assigned to Cupid.

SIR,

AS you are a man of experience in the world, I beg your advice in a matter of great importance to me. I have, for some time, been engaged in close friendship with a fine woman: your knowledge of mankind will easily inform you of the purport of that phrase. In short, I have lived with her, as with a *she-friend*, in the utmost propriety of that term: but, at present, I am under a very great embarrass; for having run out most of my fortune in the course of my conversation with her, I find myself necessitated to go into a new way of life, and by that means to make myself whole again. A favour-

able opportunity presents itself: a rich widow (the common refuge of us idle fellows) has spoke kindly of me, and I have reason to believe will very shortly put me in possession of her person and jointure. Tell me, dear Mr. Myrtle, how I shall communicate this affair to the poor creature whom I am going to forsake. If I know her temper, she loves me so well, that she would rather see me beggared and undone, than in a state of wealth and ease with another woman. She will call my endeavours to make myself happy, being false to her. Nay, I don't know but she may be fool enough to make away with herself; for the last time I talked to her, and mentioned this affair at a distance, she seemed to shew a cursed hankering after purling streams. Let me conjure thee, old Marmaduke, if thou wilt not give me some advice, to give some to this poor woman; make her sensible that a man does not take a mistress for better for worse, and that there is some difference between a lover and a husband. But you know better than I can tell you, what to say upon so nice a subject. I am your most humble servant,

W. T.
There

There is nothing which I more abhor, than that kind of wit which betrays a hardness of heart. Inhumanity is never so odious, as when it is practised with mirth and wantonness. If I may make so free with my correspondent, he seems to be a man of this unlucky turn. I shall not fall into the same fault which I condemn in him; but, that I may be serious on such an occasion, will desire my readers to consider thoroughly the evils which they are heaping up to themselves, when they engage in a criminal amour. If they die in it, they know very well what must be the dreadful consequence. If either of them break loose from the other, the melancholy and vexation that are produced on such occasions, are too dear a payment for those pleasures which preceded, and are past, as though they had never been.

The woman is generally, the greatest sufferer in cases of this nature; for by the long observations I have made on both sexes, I have established this as a maxim, that *women dissimble their passions better than men, but that men subdue their passions better than women.*

I have heard a story to my present purpose, which has very much affected me. The gentleman, from whom I heard it, was an eye-witness of several parts of it.

About ten years ago there lived at Vienna a German Count, who had long entertained a secret amour with a young lady of a considerably family. After a correspondence of gallantries, which had lasted two or three years, the father of the young Count, whose family was reduced to a low condition, found out a very advantageous match for him, and made his son sensible that he ought, in common prudence, to close with it. The Count, upon the first opportunity, acquainted his mistress very fairly with what had passed, and laid the whole matter before her, with such freedom and openness of heart, that she seemingly consented to it. She only desired of him that they might have one meeting more, before they parted for ever. The place appointed for this their meeting, was a grove, which stands at a little distance

from the town. They conversed together in this place for some time, when on a sudden the lady pulled out a pocket-pistol, and shot her lover to the heart, so that he immediately fell down dead at her feet. She then returned to her father's house, telling every one she met what she had done. Her friends, upon hearing her story, would have found out means for her to make her escape; but she told them she had killed her dear Count, because she could not live without him; and that for the same reason she was resolved to follow him by whatever way justice should determine. She was no sooner seized, but she avowed her guilt, rejected all excuses that were made in her favour, and only begged that her execution might be speedy. She was sentenced to have her head cut off, and was apprehensive of nothing but that the interest of her friends should obtain a pardon for her. When the confessor approached her, she asked him where he thought was the soul of the dead Count? He replied, that his case was very dangerous, considering the circumstances in which he died. Upon this, so desperate was her frenzy, that she bid him leave her, for that she was resolved to go to the same place where the Count was. The priest was forced to give her better hopes of the deceased, from considerations that he was upon the point of breaking off so criminal a commerce, and leading a new life, before he could bring her mind to a temper fit for one who was so near her end. Upon the day of her execution she dressed herself in all her ornaments, and walked towards the scaffold, more like an expecting bride, than a condemned criminal. My friend tells me that he saw her placed in the chair, according to the custom of that place; where, after having stretched out her neck with an air of joy, she called upon the name of the Count, which was the appointed signal for the executioner, who, with a single blow of his sword, severed her head from her body.

My reader may draw, without my assistance, a suitable moral out of so tragical a story.



C. R. Barry del.

H. H. engr.

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N^o X. THURSDAY, MARCH 18.

—MAGIS ILLA PLACENT QUÆ PLURIS EMUNTUR.

I Have lately been very much teased with the thought of Mr. Ann Page, and the memory of those many cruelties which I suffered from that obdurate fair one. Mrs. Anne was in a particular manner very fond of China ware, against which I had unfortunately declared my aversion. I do not know but this was the first occasion of her coldness towards me, which makes me sick at the very sight of a China dish ever since. This is the best introduction I can make for my present discourse, which may serve to fill up a gap till I am more at leisure to resume the thread of my amours.

There are no inclinations in women which more surprise me than their passions for chalk and China. The first of these maladies wears out in a little time; but when a woman is visited with the second, it generally takes possession of her for life. China vessels are play-things for women of all ages. An old lady of fourscore shall be as busy in cleaning an Indian mandarin, as her great granddaughter is in dressing her baby.

The common way of purchasing such trifles, if I may believe my female informers, is by exchanging old suits of cloaths for this brittle ware. The potters of China have, it seems, their factors at this distance, who retail out their several manufactures for cast cloaths and superannuated garments. I have known an old petticoat metamorphosed into a punch-bowl, and a pair of breeches into a tea-pot. For this reason my friend Tradewell, in the city, calls his great room, that is nobly furnished out with China, his wife's wardrobe. 'In yonder corner,' says he, 'are above twenty suits of cloaths, and on that scrutoire above an hundred yards of fur-belowed silk. You cannot imagine how many night gowns, stays, and mantuas, went to the raising of that pyramid. The worst of it is,' says he, 'a suit of cloaths is not suffered to last half its time, that it may be the more vendible; so that in reality this is but a more dextrous way of picking the husband's pocket, who is often purchasing a great vase of China, when he fancies that he is buying a fine head, or a silk-gown for his wife.'

There is likewise another inconvenience in this female passion for China, namely, that it administers to them great matter for wrath and sorrow. How much anger and affliction are produced daily in the hearts of my dear countrywomen, by the breach of this frail furniture! Some of them pay half their servants wages in China fragments, which their carelessness has produced. 'If thou hast a piece of earthen ware, consider,' says Epictetus, 'that it is a piece of earthen ware, and by consequence very easy and obnoxious to be broken: be not, therefore, so void of reason, as to be angry or grieved when this comes to pass.' In order, therefore, to exempt my fair readers from such additional and supernumerary calamities of life, I would advise them to forbear dealing in these perishable commodities, till such time as they are philosophers enough to keep their temper at the fall of a tea-pot or a China cup. I shall farther recommend to their serious consideration these three particulars. First, that all China ware is of a weak and transitory nature. Secondly, That the fashion of it is changeable. And, Thirdly, That it is of no use. And first of the First. The fragility of China is such as a reasonable being ought by no means to set its heart upon; though at the same time I am afraid I may complain with Seneca on the like occasion, that this very consideration recommends them to our choice; our luxury being grown so wanton, that this kind of treasure becomes the more valuable, the more easily we may be deprived of it, and that it receives a price from its brittleness. There is a kind of ostentation in wealth, which sets the possessors of it upon distinguishing themselves in those things where it is hard for the poor to follow them. For this reason, I have often wondered that our ladies have not taken pleasure in egg-shells, especially in those which are curiously stained and streaked, and which are so very tender, that they require the nicest hand to hold without breaking them. But, as if the brittleness of this ware were not sufficient to make it costly, the very fashion of it is changeable; which brings me to my second particular.

D

It

It may chance that a piece of China may survive all those accidents to which it is by nature liable, and last for some years if rightly situated and taken care of. To remedy, therefore, this inconvenience, it is so ordered that the shape of it shall grow unfashionable; which makes new supplies always necessary, and furnishes employment for life to women of great and generous souls, who cannot live out of the mode. I myself remember when there were few China vessels to be seen that held more than a dish of coffee; but their size is so gradually enlarged, that there are many, at present, which are capable of holding half a hoghead. The fashion of the tea-cup is also greatly altered, and has run through a wonderful variety of colour, shape and size.

But, in the last place, China ware is of no use. Who would not laugh to see a smith's shop furnished with anvils and hammers of China? The furniture of a

lady's favourite room is altogether as absurd: you see jars of a prodigious capacity that are to hold nothing. I have seen horses, and herds of cattle, in this fine sort of porcelain; not to mention the several Chinese ladies, who, perhaps, are naturally enough represented in these frail materials.

Did our women take delight in heaping up piles of earthen platters, brown jugs, and the like useful products of our British potteries, there would be some sense in it. They might be ranged in as fine figures, and disposed of in as beautiful pieces of architecture: but there is an objection to these which cannot be overcome, namely, that they would be of some use, and might be taken down on all occasions, to be employed in services of the family; besides, that they are intolerably cheap, and most shamefully durable and lasting.

Nº XI. SATURDAY, MARCH 20.

MÆCENAS ATAVIS EDITE REGIBUS.

BENTLEY'S HORACE.

THE following epistle is written to me from the parish of Gotham, in Herefordshire, from one who had credentials from me to be received as an humble servant to a young lady of the family which he mentions. Because it may be an instruction to all who court great alliances, I shall insert it word for word as it came to my hands.

SWEET MR. MYRTLE,

ACCORDING to your persuasion, I came down here into the country, with a design to ingraft myself into the family to which you recommended me; but I wish you had thought a little more of it, before you gave me that advice; for a man is not always made happy by having settled himself in a powerful house; for riches and honour are ornamental to the possessors of them, only when those possessors have such arts or endowments which would render them conspicuous without them: but these creatures to whom you advised me to be allied, are such, whose interest it is to court privacy, and are made up of so many defects, that they could not better recommend themselves to the world, or consult their own interest, than by hiding; but they are so little inclined to such a prudent behaviour, that they seem to think

that their appearance, upon all occasions, cannot chuse but be advantageous to them; and yet, such is the force of Nature in biasing all it's instruments to the uses for which she had made them most fit, that they are ever undertaking what would make the most beautiful of the human race appear as ugly as themselves. Thus they take upon them to manage all things in this country; and if any man is to be accused, arrested, or disgraced, one of those hideous creatures has certainly a hand in it. By these methods and arts they govern those who contempt them, and are perpetually followed by crowds who hate them; at the same time there is I know not what excessively comic and diverting, to behold these very odd fellows in their magnificencies.

You must know, they set up extremely for genealogies, old codes, and mystic writings, and knowing abundance of what was never worth knowing in the several ages in which it was acted; but there is constantly, in all they pretend to, some circumstances which secretly tends to raise the honour and antiquity of their family. Thus they are not contented, as all we the rest of the world are, to become more antient every day than other as time passes on, but they

grow

grow old backwards; and every now-and-then they make some new purchase of musty rolls and papers, which they tell you acquaints them with some new matter concerning their further antiquity. I met here, to my great surprize, Abednego the Jew, who used to transfer stock for me at Change Alley. I was going to salute him, but he tipped me the wink, and taking me apart at a proper opportunity, desired me not to discover him; 'For,' says he, laughing, 'I am come down here as a cheat.' He explained himself further, That his way was to get some paper that was mouldy, dusty, or moth-eaten, and write upon it Hebrew characters, which he sold to Sir Anthony Crabtree's library. You must know, there is nothing so monstrous but they can make pass upon the people; so terrible are the Crabtrees in this county. The last piece of antiquity which they produced, was a letter written in Noah's own hand, to their ancestor, and found upon a mountain in Wales, (which, by the way, is said by them to be the oldest and highest mountain in the world) directed to their ancestor Sir Robert Crabtree, an Antediluvian knight. This, Sir, passes very currently here, and is well received; because all allow there have been no faces like theirs in any other family since the Flood.

It would be endless to give you a distinct account of these worthies in one letter, but I will go as far as I can in it. I was, when I declared my love, appointed an hour in there great hall, where were assembled all their relations and tenants; but instead of receiving me with civility, as one who desired to be of their family, as they know not how to shew power and greatness, but by doing things terrible and disagreeable. Mr. Peter Brickdust stands up before all the company, and enters into a downright invective against me to shew that I was not fit to be entertained among them. They call him here at Gotham, and in all these parts, the *Accuser*, because it is his natural propensity to think the worst of every man. Though the Implement has a very great estate, the poverty of his soul is such, that he will do any thing for a further penny. He condescends to audit part of the rents of Sir Anthony's estate; and, though born to a better fortune than the knight himself, is his utter slave. His business about him is to find out somebody or other for him, from time to time, on whom to exercise

his great power and interest. Peter has the very look of a wicked one of low practice. Peter is made for a lurcher; and, as being a creature of prey, he rises to the object he aims at, as if he were going to spring at some game; but he flinks, as you may have seen a cur at once exert and check his little anger when he sees a strange mastiff. Naturalists say all men have something in their aspect of other animals, which resemble them in constitution. Peter's countenance discovers him a creature of small prey; it is a mixture of the face of a cat, and that of an owl. He has the spiteful eagerness of the former, blended with the stupid gravity of the latter. He stood behind a post all the while he was talking; and groped it as if he were feeling for hobnails. All that he said was so extravagant, wild, and groundless, and urged with a mien so suitable to the falsehood and folly of it, that I was rather diverted than offended at Brickdust. When from another quarter of the hall, placed just under a gallery, there stood up the knight's brother. It is impossible to express the particularity of this gentleman. His mien is like that of a broken tradesman the first day he wears a sword: his aspect was sad, but rather the face of a man incapable of mirth, than under any sorrow; and yet he does not look dull neither, but attentive to both worlds at once, and has in his brow both the usurer and the saint. I observed great respect paid to him; but methought some leavings of conscience made him look somewhat abashed at the great civilities which were paid him. He roundly asserted I was not worth a groat, and indeed made it out in a moment; for by some trick or other, he had got in his custody all the writings which make out the title to my estate.

What made this whole matter the more extravagantly pleasant was, that there is an odd droning loudness in the brother's voice, which made a large Irish greyhound open at every pause he made. That great furly creature, made so docile and servile, was to me matter of much entertainment and curiosity. The knight's brother, I assure you, spoke with a good steady impudence; and having been long inured to talk what he does not mean, he looks as if he meant what he said.

The pleasantry of this excellent farce is, that all these fellows were bred Presbyterians, and are now set up for High-

churchmen. They carry it admirably well; and the partizans do not distinguish that there is a difference between those who are of neither side, from generous principles, and those who are disinterested only from having no principles at all. The knight himself was not in the country, but is expected every day; they say he is a precious one; they make me expect he will treat me after another way. His manner is very drole: he is very affable, and yet keeps you at a distance; for he talks to every body, but will let nobody understand him. Here is a gentleman in the country, a good intelligent companion, that gives me a very pleasant idea of him: he says he has seen him go through his great hall full of company,

and whisper every man as he passed along; when they have all had the whisper, they have held up their heads in a silly amazement, like geese when they are drinking. But perhaps more of this another time. You would marry me into this goodly house! I thank you for nothing, dear Sir; and am your humble servant for That.

P. S. Here is a story here, that Mr. What-d'ye-call laughs at all they pretend to do against him, and is prepared for the worst that can happen. To inure himself to be a public spectacle, they say, he rid an hour and an half, at noon day, on Wednesday last, behind Charles the First, at Charing Cross.

Nº XII. TUESDAY, MARCH 23.

WHEN LOVE'S WELL TIM'D, 'TIS NOT A FAULT TO LOVE;
THE STRONG, THE BRAVE, THE VIRTUOUS, AND THE WISE,
SINK IN THE SOFT CAPTIVITY TOGETHER.

PORTIUS IN CATO.

THE following letter, written in the finest Italian female hand, as beautiful as a picture or draught of a letter, rather than the work of a pen, in the finest small gilt paper, when opened, diffused the most agreeable odours, which very suddenly seize the brains of those who have ever been sick in love. There is no necessity, on such an occasion as this, that the epistle should be filled with sprightly expressions. The fold of the letter, the care in sealing it, and the device on the seal, are the great points in favours of this kind from the fair; for when it is a condescension to do any thing at all, every thing that is not severe is gracious. As soon as I looked upon the hand, my poor fond head would needs persuade itself that it came from Mrs. Page; but I read, and found it was the acknowledgment of an obligation I have not merit enough ever to be capable of laying upon any. The letter is thus.

MR. MYTLE, MARCH 19, 1714.

SINCE you have taken upon yourself the province of Love, all transactions relating to that passion most properly belong to your paper. I beg the favour of you to insert this my epistle in your very next, in order to give the earliest notice possible of my

having received very great favour and honour done to me, by some one to whom I am more obliged than it can ever be in my power to return. I beg therefore that you will insert the following Advertisement, and you will oblige (though unknown) your servant, and great admirer,

A. B.

‘ A CERTAIN Present, with a letter, from an unknown hand, hath been very safely delivered to the party to whom directed.’

It is the nicest part of commerce in the world, that of doing and receiving benefits. Benefits are ever to be considered rather by their quality than quantity; and there are so many thousand circumstances with respect to time, person, and place, which heighten and allay the value, that even in ordinary life it is almost an impossibility to lay down rules on this subject; because it alters in every individual case that can happen; and there is something arises in it, which is so inexplicable, that none but the persons concerned can judge of them, and those, as well as all other persons, are incapable of giving judgment in their own case. All these circumstances are still more intricate in that part of life which is naturally above the

the rules of any laws, and must flow from the very soul to be of any regard at all; and are more exquisitely valuable and considerable, as they proceed more from affection, without any manner of respect to the intrinsic worth of what is given, and it is indifferent whether it be a bit of ribband or a jewel. The Lover in the comedy is not, methinks, absurd, where he prates of his rules and observations on this subject.

'You must entertain women high, and bribe all about them. They talk of Ovid and his Art of Loving. Be liberal and you outdo his precepts. The art of love, Sir, is the art of giving. Be free to women, they'll be free to you. Not every open-handed fellow hits it neither. Some give up lap-fulls, and yet never oblige. The manner you know, of doing a thing, is more than the thing itself. Some drop a jewel, which had been refused if bluntly offered.

'Some lose at play what they design a present.

'The skill is to be generous, and seem not to know it of yourself, 'tis done with so much ease; but a liberal blockhead presents a mistress as he'd give an alms.'

I intend all this upon the passion of love within the strictest rules; but benefits and injuries cannot touch to the quick, till the passion is arrived to such a height as to be mutual. Before that, all presents and services are only the offerings of a slave to a tyrant; it is therefore necessary, to make them worthy to be received, to shew that they proceed from affection, and that all your talents are employed in subserviency to that affection. The skill and address which is used on these occasions in conveying presents, or doing any other obliging thing, is for this reason much more regarded than the presents or actions themselves. I knew a gentleman who affected making good company cheerful, and diverting himself with a whimsical way he had of laying particular obligations upon several ladies by the same action, and making each believe it was done for her sake. Thus he would make a ball, and tell one he wished she would give him leave to name for whom it was principally intended: another, that he was overjoyed to see her there, for that he was sure, had she not, nobody else would have been there that evening.

He would whisper a third, who was brought thither by relation; and, without being named—'And did your cousin believe she introduced you hither?

'There is a gentleman yonder said, she came with you, and not you with her.'

By this wily way, he was by all esteemed the most obliging fine gentleman; that was so genteely said, and t'other thing so prettily contrived, that who but Charles Myrtle with all the fair and delightful, in his time. About his flourishing years the stage had a particular liveliness owing to this passion, but too often to this passion abused and misrepresented. Otway, who wrote then, exposed, in his play of Venice Preserved, the bounty of a silly disagreeable old sinner, who at that time was a great pretender to politics, in which he was the most ungainly creature, and nothing could be more ridiculous than Antonio (for so he calls him) a politician, except Antonio a lover. This grim puzzled leech is thus treated by his Aquilina, whom he keeps and visits. In one of those lovely moments she says to him, 'I hate you, detest you, loath you; I am weary of you, I am sick of you. Crazy in your head, and lazy in your body, you love to be meddling with every thing; and, if you had not money you are good for nothing.' This imperious wench of this fribbling politician was in the interests of those who were then attempting to destroy his country: she rates him in behalf of Pierre, who is her favourite, and is then plotting the destruction of Venice—'Where's my Lord, my Happiness, my Love, my God, my Hero!' This contemptible image represents in a very lively manner, how offensive every endeavour to please is in the man who is in himself disagreeable. Poor Antonio, to satisfy an amorous itch, must not only maintain his wench, but support every ruffian in her favour that is an enemy to his country; which will for ever be the fate of those who attempt to be what nature never designed them, wits, politicians, and lovers.

But I will break off this discourse to oblige a neighbour, who writes me the following letter.

GOOD MR. MYRTLE,

AS I am your near neighbour, within two doors of the Lover's Lodge, and within the sound of your melodious bass-viol,

viol, I cannot better express my gratitude for that favour you do my ears, than by inviting you to divert your eyes in my large gallery, which is now garnished, from top to bottom, with the finest paintings Italy has ever produced. I dare promise myself you will find such variety, and such beautiful objects, of both history and landscape, profane and sacred, that it will not only be sufficient to please and recreate the sight, but also to yield satisfaction and pleasure to your mind, and instructive enough to inform and improve every body's else. When you have well viewed and considered the whole collection, then I

am to leave it to you, whether you will not think it may be of use to the readers of your Lover, (which I understand is to come out to-morrow, very luckily for me the day before my sale begins) to recommend the viewing of my collection to them, as a very agreeable and instructive amusement to all persons in love. But this, and every thing else that may concern me or my collection, I leave to Mr. Myrtle's judgment, and known readiness to serve mankind in their particular stations of life. I am, Sir, your most obedient, and obliged humble servant,

JAMES GRAME.

N° XIII. THURSDAY, MARCH 25.

MULTI DE MAGNIS, PER SOMNUM, REBUS LOQUUNTUR.

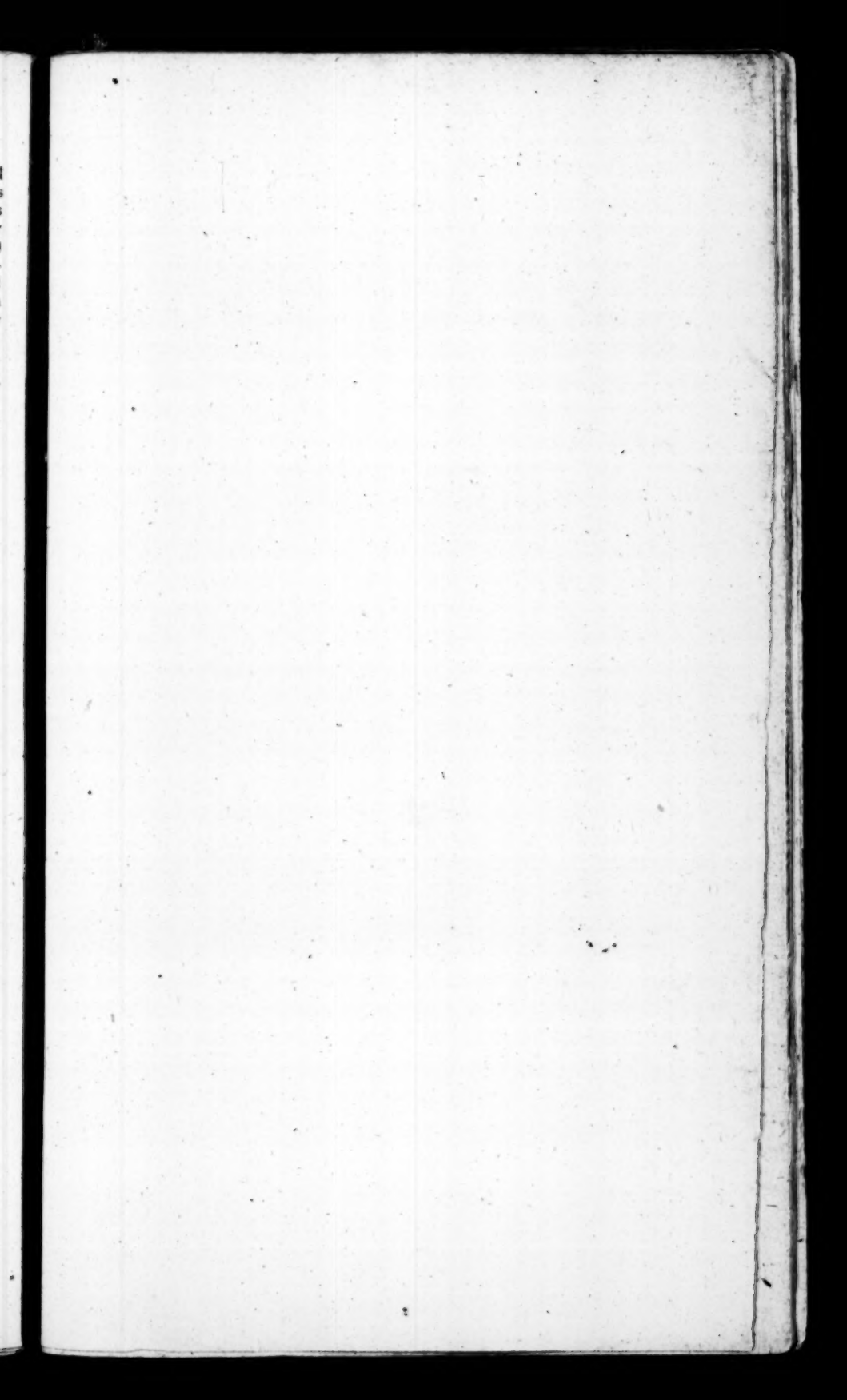
LUCR.

THE strong propensity that, from my youth, I have had to Love, hath betrayed me into innumerable singularities, which the insensible part of mankind are apt to turn into ridicule. The astonishing accounts of sympathy, fascination, errantry, and enchantments, are thereby become so familiar to me, that my conversation, upon those subjects, hath made several good people believe me to be no better than I should be. My behaviour hath heretofore been suitable to my opinions. I have lost great advantages by waiting for lucky days, and have been locked upon severely by fair eyes, while I expected the benign aspect of my stars. Many a time have I missed a ball, for the pleasure of walking by a purling stream; and chose to wander in unfrequented solitudes, when I might have been a king at *questions and commands*. It is well known what a prospect I had of rising by the law, if I had not thought it more noble to fill my study with poems and romances, than with dull records, and mutable acts of parliament. I intend at some convenient season, to communicate to the public a catalogue of my books; and shall, every now and then, oblige the world with extracts out of those manuscripts, which love and leisure have drawn from my pen. I have a romance, in seven neat folios, almost finished; besides novels, ditties, and madrigals, innumerable. The follow-

ing story is collected out of writers in so learned a language, that I am almost ashamed to own it. I must say for my excuse, that it was compiled in my twentieth year; upon my leaving the university, and is adapted to the taste of those who are far gone in romance; not to mention the several morals that may be draw from it. I have thought fit to call it—

THE DREAMS OF ENDYMION.

THE night was far advanced, and sleep had sealed the eyes of the most watchful lovers, when on a sudden, a confused sound of trumpets, cymbals, and clarions, made all the inhabitants of Heraclea start from their beds in terror and amazement. An eclipse of the moon was the occasion of this uproar; and a mixed multitude of all ages and conditions ran directly to the top of Mount Latmos with their instruments of music, to assist the fair planet, which they imagined either to have fainted away, or to have been forced from her sphere by the power of magical incantations. As soon as they had restored her to her former beauty, they returned home with joy and triumph, to take that benefit of repose which they thought their piety deserved. Only Cleander, the amorous Cleander, gave himself up to his musings, and wandering through the trees that clothe Mount Latmos, insensibly





C. R. R. del.

J. Smith sculp.

sensibly reached the summit of the mountain. He was feeding his eyes with the fine landscape that was spread before him, when he heard a languishing voice utter these words, intermixed with sighs: "Cruel goddess! why wilt thou make me wretched by the remembrance of my happiness!"—"Ye powers!" said Cleander to himself, "is not that the voice of Endymion?" He had no sooner said this, than he crept along whither the voice directed him, and saw to his inexpressible astonishment the following spectacle. This strange object was a man stretched at length on a declivity of the mountain, with his arms across his breast, and his eyes levelled at the moon. "Thou fair regent of the Moon," said he, "after the enjoyment of a goddess, why wilt thou degrade thy lover; and throw him back to Mount Latmos and mortality? Ah! inconsistent, thou thinkest no more of Endymion."—"Tis he! 'tis he!" cried Cleander; "'tis Endymion, or the ghost of my friend!" With these words he ran to him, and caught him in his arms with the warmest expressions of transport. If Cleander was overjoyed, Endymion was no less; and their endearments had lasted a long time, if Cleander's curiosity had not spurred him to learn the cause of Endymion's long absence from Heraclea, his adventures, and the reason of his odd complaints. After repeated intreaties, Endymion delivered himself in the following manner.

"You may remember, that my frequent contemplation of the heavens had gained me the reputation of a great astronomer among the sages of Heraclea. But had there not been more powerful motives, I had not, for thirst of knowledge, abandoned the good-natured ladies of our city, with so much youth and vigour about me. You must know, that I had so often dreamt that Diana looked kindly on me, that I went to her temple at Ephesus to learn the will of the goddess. I was surprised to find her famous statue there entirely to resemble the lovely image that had a thousand times smiled on me in my visions. The succeeding night I bribed the priestess with a considerable sum, to let me pass the time within the temple. After I had said whatever a violent passion could inspire, I fell in a trance before the shrine that encom-

passed her statue, and, to my inexpressible joy, saw the goddess descend, and bid me ask her, with a smile, whatever I desired. "Bright goddess," said I, "were I to have my wish, I would beg that the pleasure I now enjoy might be eternal. But since that is too much, give me, I pray thee, a seat among the stars that may place me ever in thy view, and nearest to thy chariot. Or, if the number of the stars be compleat, and the Destinies deny me this; grant me, at least, to be wholly thine upon earth; and disdain not the present that I make thee of myself."—"Whether in heaven or in earth," answered the goddess, "I will lose no opportunity to gratify thee." Scarce had she uttered these words, but I lost the sight of her, and only heard the sound of her quiver, as she turned and glided away.

I related my vision the next morning to Evadne the priestess, who expressed great joy at my success, and having sprinkled me with water from the sacred fountain, and spoken mysterious words, dismissed me with a phial of powerful juices, and instructions how to use it. According to her commands, I repaired to this mountain, where having drank off the enchanted draught, I lay stretched upon the ground, and fixed my eyes with delight on the moon. Suddenly, methought, the heavens were cleft, and an ivory chariot, drawn by horses or dragons, took me up, and whirled me over cities, rivers, forests, and oceans, in a moment of time. I was at length set down in the middle of a wood, where the face of nature was more delicious than the imagination of poets or painters has yet described. I had not walked long, before I heard the voices of women; and at my drawing near I perceived Diana in the midst of her nymphs. The beautiful virgins were placed round her, under the shadow of trees; some of them lay stretched on the grass; others were viewing themselves in the streams: here was one sharpening the point of an arrow; there another was stroaking a hound. Their horns were hung upon the boughs, and their bows and quivers were carelessly scattered upon the ground. The queen herself was less distinguished by her golden bow and silver

silver crescent, than by that beauty
 which had long held me captive. I
 rustled a little too eagerly through the
 boughs where I had concealed myself,
 when a nymph that stood near her,
 casting a look towards me, cried out—
 “A man! a man!” At that word one
 of the oldest of the virgins bent her
 bow at me, and had shot me through
 the heart, if Diana had not seasonably
 interposed. “Hold!” cried the god-
 des, “if he must die, let him die by
 my hand. Give me,” continued she,
 “the bundle of arrows that Cupid pre-
 sented me with the other day, when
 we hunted in the Idalian grove.” A
 pretty young nymph having put them
 in her hands, she threw arrow after
 arrow at me, till I had received a hun-
 dred wounds, which conveyed such a
 subtle poison into my blood, that I lost
 my sight, staggered, and fell down
 dead. I had not lain long in that con-
 dition, when, to my great amazement,
 I found myself in the arms of Diana,
 dressed after the manner of her nymphs;
 and I saw the light and her eyes at
 the same time. I found, after that,
 she had used that seeming cruelty to
 conceal our loves; and thenceforward
 I passed for one of her sex, and was
 looked upon as the favourite nymph
 of her train. My days were spent in
 those sports which she takes pleasure
 in. How often have we ranged the
 deserts of Hyrcania! How agreeably
 have we wandered on the banks of
 Peneus, or Eurotas! How many lions
 have we coursed in Getulia! How
 have we panted after the swiftest deer
 in Crete, and pursued the tigers of
 Armenia! But our nights—To what
 a pitch of glory and happiness was I
 raised! How much happier yet were
 my lot, if the mouth that tasted were
 allowed to reveal my joys! But, oh,
 Cleander! what shall we think of the
 other sex, when I shall have assured
 thee, that goddesses themselves are
 inconstant! It is in the nature of fe-
 males to be suddenly hurried from one
 extreme to another. Love or hate
 wholly possesses them; they have no
 third passion. What they will, they
 will absolutely, and demand unlimited
 obedience. They are ever prepared to
 shew how little they can value their
 lovers, and sacrifice what was once
 held dear to their ambition and thirst
 of dominion. When they cease to

love, they endeavour to persuade us,
 by coldness and slighting usage, that
 we never were beloved. But not be-
 ing able to impose so far on our un-
 derstanding, and to give the lie to our
 senses, they endeavour to make us lose
 the memory, as they have lost the desire
 of possession. After so long a course
 of sighs, vows, fidelity, submission,
 and whatever lovers talk of, I was
 hurried away from the happy regions
 I have described, in the same manner
 that I went; and, not many hours
 since, found my body extended on this
 mountain, where the goddess descended
 with a veil over her face; but, upon
 hearing a noise of trumpets and cla-
 rions, left me without speaking, and
 fled to the moon in an instant. The
 assurance that I was abandoned, made
 me vent those complaints, which were
 still the more just, because, after the
 favour of a goddess, I shall loathe the
 faint beauties of Heraclea.

Endymion had no sooner spoke these
 words, than he and his friend were sur-
 prised with a loud laugh from behind a
 bush that grew near them. Instantly
 started up three young women, who had
 dogged Cleander in his solitary walk,
 one of which was his mistress. They
 ran so fast to Heraclea, that he could
 not overtake them; and, before ten that
 morning, all the women of the town had
 a sting at Endymion. Though they
 secretly believed his amours to be real,
 they had the malice to ridicule them, as
 the visions of a distempered imagination.
 Nay, these giggling gipsies had credit
 enough to get the poor gentleman jested
 into a proverb; inasmuch, that if a lover
 blabbs out the secret, the Heracleans
 call him a lunatic; they ask a pretty
 fellow that conceals his intrigues, if he
 hath a *mistress in the clouds*? and to boast
 of favours, is, with them, to have the
dreams of Endymion.

I could dream on much longer, with
 great delight to myself at least, but that
 I am awakened by the following letter
 from a gentleman whom I have great
 reason to have a high respect for, having
 frequently been an eye-witness of his
 behaviour, both as to love and honour.
 I have seen him, as a lover, win by fair
 courtship at least fifty ladies; and as a
 soldier in open field, obtain compleat
 victories always over superior numbers,
 and sometimes observed the whole ow-
 ing to his single valour.

SIR,

I Am to have a benefit play on Monday next; and the streis of the story depending upon Love, I hope it will find room in your paper.

It is the Albion Queens, with the

Death of Mary Queen of Scotland: where that illustrious lover, the Duke of Norfolk, rather than he will deny his flame, gives up his life. Whenever I see you, I shall do you honour; and am, Sir, your most humble servant,

GEORGE POWEL.

N^o XIV. SATURDAY, MARCH 27.

ORDERINT DUM METUANT.

MOTTO ON SIR ANTHONY CRABTREE'S COACH.

I Am to-day very busy, having a wedding suit for a gentleman, and the knots of the bride, offered to my consideration, and the wedding itself to be on Easter Tuesday; therefore the reader must be contented with this letter, all which I do not myself understand, for the entertainment of this day.

MR. MYRTLE,

READING the letter in your Lover of the 20th, from your friend, concerning the family of the Crabtrees, I was pleased at the non-reception of your friend into that ridiculous generation; in which family, as I am told, may be found an antique record in Hebrew, proving their original. Sir Anthony is cautious of shewing the manuscript; but his secretary, with whom I'm well acquainted, and whose knowledge is great in crabbed characters, does assure me it's writ in the profane ignorant style used by the fanatics before the Restoration, and seems to be formed out of the phrases of the Revelations, with many periods ending with the sight of the beast, and the image of the beast, and the like. I think your friend ought to be thankful for his deliverance: however, I can't say Sir Anthony was always for destroying every thing, having once saved (not his country, but) his house. The story is thus related by a servant then living in the family. It seems, in the time of Sir Ralph, father to this precious sick Anthony, there was in the family a man that had lived long, but wicked, under the cloak of religion; but at length was discovered to have defiled the house with a maid-servant who proved with child, which was an abomination to Sir Ralph, who turned both out of doors without paying them their wages, being considerable; and ordered the bed where-

in the crime had been committed, with the furniture of that room, to be burnt; which they were accordingly. The fellow thought, by marrying the woman, he might so far ingratiate himself into his master's favour as to get their wages; but Sir Ralph was too religious to allow that any thing could be due to the wicked. Upon which the fellow resolved, since he was to be a loser, his master should be no gainer; therefore sent a message to Sir Ralph, to let him know, if he would pay him, he had something of moment to impart to him, which might be for the good of him and his family. To this the old gentleman gave ear; and being ever apprehensive of some plot or other against him (in which Sir Anthony takes much after him) resolved to pay the fellow, and have him examined; and when the great secret came out, it was, that he and the maid had lain together upon every bed in the house, and every room. Upon which the whole house and furniture was condemned to be burnt on a certain day; but, the night before the execution, Sir Anthony came down to his father's, and, with a high hand saved house and goods. This is the plain well-known matter of fact; and this is the first house that I ever heard of to have been so near burning by the fire of Love. I can assure you the family is now grown much more polite; but having been bred in such strictness and formality during the time of good Sir Ralph, both Anthony and his brother Zachariah come into the wench's chamber with the same air they used to enter their congregations of saints. It is a hard thing to unlearn gestures of the body; and though Anthony has quite got over all the prejudices of his education, not only as to superstition, but as to religion also, he makes a very queer

E figure;

figure; and the persecuted sneak is still in his face, though he now sets up for a persecutor.

If the four behaviour and hypocrisy, which the enemies to Dissenters accuse them of, was utterly forgotten, and which, by their freedom and more open communication with the rest of the world from the Toleration, is really at an end; I say, if all this were wholly out of the memory of man, all their rancour, spite, and obstinacy, might be revived among the Crabtrees. This particular, however, is to be more emphatically enlarged upon by those who shall write their history; which is, that they are impudent to a jest. They having as little respect for mankind as mankind has for them, they do not care how gross the thing is they attempt, so they can carry it. Sir Anthony wanting a cause, the last circuit, to keep up the face of his grandeur, and to make himself popular, spoke to Brickduft to accuse somebody for disrespect to an *illustrious family*. They could not find such a one; but Brickduft told him of a hawker who had books about him writ in favour of that house. Sir Anthony said, that would do as well, provided they could persuade people to pronounce the books were against that interest. Well, they got the poor hawker in amongst them at the county court, and, in spite of all that the gentlemen of greatest honour, quality, and estate, could say, the cry went against the pedlar. There were indeed a great many people of sense and fashion, who are carried away by the Crabtrees, solicited to call out, that the hawker should be turn-

ed out of the place, when they saw, from the appearance for him, they could carry it no further. But they could procure nobody to do even this, but a natural fool, who had made sport at a Winchester wedding, and is every where as much known for an idiot, as if he had his Moorish dancer's habit and bells on. Thus, between jest and earnest, they turned out the pedlar, for the very contrary of what the fellow had done. Sir Anthony says this was right, and still professes he is a friend to that family: 'For,' says that merry cunning fellow, 'if I can bring it to that pass, that nobody shall dare to speak for them without my leave, I shall easily manage that nobody dare to be against them.' This is, Mr. Myrtle, the logic of the Crabtrees. But I know not how to relate half the fine things I know of them; read Sancho Panza's Government in Barataria; get Hudibras by heart; cast your eye upon books of dreams, incantations, and witchcrafts; and it will give you some faint pictures of the exotic and comic designs of this unaccountable race, who are (according to their own different accounts of their parts and births) occasionally Syrians, Egyptians, Saxons, Arabians, and every thing but Welch, British, Scotch, Irish, or any thing that is for the interest of these dominions. As you are the patron of Love, I desire to know of you, whether after this faithful representation of things, you ought to lament that your friend has been rejected by the Crabtrees. Your most humble servant,

EPHRAIM CASTLESOAP.

Nº XV. TUESDAY, MARCH 31.

CREDE MIHI, QUAMVIS CONTEMNNA MURMURA FAME,
HIC TIBI PALLORI, CYNTHIA, VERSUS ERIT.

PROPERT.

I Should be but a very ill guide to others in the ways of this town, if I continually kept in my Lodge: I do sometimes make excursions, and visit my neighbours, whose manners and characters cannot but be of great use to the youth of this kingdom, whom I propose to conduct in safety, if they will follow my advice. It is the business of a pilot to discover shoals, rocks, and quicksands, in order to land his passengers in safety. I shall take pains to hang out lights; but if those who sail after me

will rather chuse to be stranded (where I have given them a signal of danger) than follow my course, their shipwreck is not to be imputed to me who lead them.

There are now in town, among the ladies who have given up all other considerations to gratify themselves in one sort of delight, three eminent above the rest for their charms and vices. The first can only please novices; the second seeks only men of business, and such of them as are between fools and knaves; the

the third runs through the whole race of men, and has arts enough about her to ensnare them all, as well as desire enough to entertain them all. The ladies are professed courtezans, and live upon it.

The first I shall give an account of is Jenny Lipsy. All creatures of prey have their particular game, and never dream of any other. Jenny never aims at any but novices; and she makes her advances with so much skill, that she is seldom without two or three in pursuit of her, who are in their first month of a town life. I sate by her, a week or two ago, at a play. There was seated just before her a pretty snug Academic, who, I observed, was destined for her entertainment that evening. There sate by her a coarse Hoyden in a black scarf, who seemed a servant maid stolen out with Jenny on this frolic to a play. Jenny, at every thing which passed in the play that had little sense in it, was delighted as not to contain herself from loud laughs: but particularly checked herself, with a well-acted romp-like confusion, when she was observed by the pretty young gentleman; her maid professing, in a lower voice, she would never come abroad with her again. Many kind looks, however, passed between my young gentleman and one he conceived as unskilled in the town as himself. She begged his pardon two or three times for pressing upon him negligently; and hoped there was no offence, in such a tone and voice, and such a natural impertinence and want of judgment, as would have deceived any man in town but Roger Veterane, who suspects every thing. My young spark offered his service, at the end of the play, to see her out: Jenny said he was a stranger to her, though he looked like a civil body; but her maid interposed, and said—'If the gentleman will get us out of the crowd, there can be no harm,' since she would keep with her.

The second woman of consideration is that artful shy dame Madam Twilight. This lady has got a step or two in age, experience, and address, beyond Miss Jenny above-mentioned. She has been above these ten years known for what she is; but she has preserved such a decency in her manners, and has so little frolic in her temper, that every lover takes it she is as much pleased with him as he with her. Twilight, therefore, has passed her ten years libertinism in short

marriages, rather than different riots.

The many gallants, whose relief she is, treat her with civility and respect wherever they meet her; and every man flatters himself it is the necessity of her affairs made her take such a loose, but she certainly loved nobody but him. Twilight, as I said, is never outrageously joyful, but can comply with a whisper, and retire very willingly with great reluctance, seldom discovering desire enough to overcome the confusion to which her compliance obliges her. But I must leave her character half drawn, and in the dress she often affects, a veil, to hasten to her, who gives me most disquiet of any of her sex, when I am endeavouring to save the free and innocent from the slavery to which she affects to reduce all mortals, especially those of merit.

This lady, who is the heroine of today's paper, as well acquainted with this town as the plains of Arcadia, dignified and distinguished among the loose wanderers of Love by the name of Clidamira Dustgown is mistress of the whole art of women; she can do what she pleases, with whom she pleases, and I have not yet known any one that could save himself from her but by flight. She can, as occasion serves, be tergament and haughty, if the follower is in his nature servile; then again so humble and resigning to those who love and admire none but themselves! She can lead the conversation among raw youths who are proud of being admitted into her company, and will slip and grow so girlish, and prevail upon hardened and experienced rakes of the town, who are above hurting any thing but innocence. Clidamira is a female rake: the male ones, I just now observed, affect mostly to have to do with the innocent, and Climadira's passion is to deceive and bubble the knowing. To indulge this humour in herself, she has all the learning of a spark of the town; is deep in miscellany poems, plays, novels, and romances; has the copies of verses, scandals, and whiffers, all the winter, which are brought forth in London and Westminster; all the summer, those produced at Epsum, Tunbridge, and the Bath. Her lewdness is as great, and her understanding greater, than that of any of her admirers: by the force of the latter she is as much courted, even by those who have had her, (as the phrase is) as the finest woman whose

charms are yet untasted; her skill is such that her practice in wickedness has not at all made her hypocrisy of innocence appear awkward or unlovely, but she can be any thing she ever was to those who like what she was better than what she is, the most accomplished frolic, and disolute of all wenches. What makes me have no patience with Madam Dust-gown, is, that she is now laying all her snares, and displaying all her charms, to withdraw my heart from Mrs. Page. But she shall die; I will sacrifice her, to gain a smile for that merit from my own incomparable fair-one.

Clidamira has at this time three different keepers; a rich citizen, whom she has orders, upon occasion, to write to in the style of a widow who wants his charity; a married man of quality, whom she is to address so, as that his lady who is as jealous as a statesman, and admires her lord for the finest gentleman in the world, might read it; her third is a gentleman learned in the laws, whom she writes to as his client, when she has a mind to raise small sums to support her lavish gallant, who lives upon gratifying her real passion, and sharing the hire of her prostitution. It was necessary last week her dear comrade should have a fine horse he had seen; she levied the price of him upon her slaves by the following method. She writes

TO HER CITY FRIEND.

SIR,
DID I not know what acts of charity your worship daily does, and that your good lady is as inclined to do good as yourself, I should not take this liberty to move your compassion to the widow and fatherless. If your worship's business should divert you from taking notice of this according to the direction here

under written, I shall presume to wait upon your lady myself. I am, &c.

The latter circumstance being a threat, immediately produced a largess above her ordinary salary.

The great skill is to write letters that may fall into any hands, even a wife's, and discover nothing. Her stile to my Lord was thus.

MY LORD,

IS it possible you can doat with so much constancy on the charms of a wife, to be blind to the thousand nameless things that I do and say before you, even in her presence, to reveal a passion too strong to be smothered?

My lady pouts ten days after the intercepting such a billet, misinterprets every look and sentence of every friend she has, and keeps my lord waking till he has dived into the matter, and fined for his quiet to Clidamira.

Her worthy Chamber-council is captivated at the prodigious wit of the creature, when she sends a bundle of old parchments from widow Lackitt, and has them lodged with his clerk with a couple of guineas, and underwrites she will give him his brief at her own lodgings. The busy creature, who is in joy when he is not actually taking pains, is so exquisitely exalted at the wit, cunning, and address, of deceiving that notable deep discernor his own clerk, that, for fear of appearing too dull for an hint himself cash is immediately conveyed to his client, as left with him from the person who is to lend the money upon the mortgage. Thus the sly thief shews, though he is a man of business, if he would give his mind to it, he could be as notable a gallant as the best. She is accommodated, and her council is cheated in raptures.

N^O XVI. THURSDAY, APRIL 1.

— SOME GRAINS OF SENSE
STILL MIXT WITH VOLLIES OF IMPERTINENCE.

ROCHESTER'S POEMS.

THE writer of the following letter being a person, if you will believe his own story, the most impertinently crossed in love that ever any mortal was,

and allowing his letter to sit only for one day in the year, I have let him have his will, and made it the business of this.

MR.

MR. MYRTLE.

SINCE I writ my last to you, wherein I gave you some account of the confounded usage which I met with from the mischievous and ridiculous race of the Crabtrees, I have made it my business to enquire into, and consider the arts and stratagems, by which a people so like in genius to the *Cercopithecæ*, should so long be suffered to impose upon many wise, brave, and learned gentlemen in this county. After much deliberation with myself, I am come to this resolution, That all their successes are owing to a certain graceless impudence in themselves, and an unmanly modesty in others. There is nothing but they will attempt from their want of deference to the rest of the world; and there is nothing but others seem ready to suffer from a too great sensibility of what the world will think of them. Among other the extraordinary circumstances by which this race is signalized I am most diverted with their superstition: they are, you must know, great observers of lucky and unlucky days; and Sir Anthony, whose great talent lies in making fools of mankind, chuses for the first of April to settle his schemes for the ensuing year; and yet, with all the hurry which he eternally appears in he is the laziest thief living. One of his propositions for management is to affect bustle, and avoid business: this, with several other wise maxims, is set down by his secretary to be entered upon the first of April next. The next to that, as I could gather it out of Mr. Secretary's Coptic characters, is, Never to look before hand, but do as well as you can in the present moment.

Sir Anthony has had great success in following this last position; but his noddle is so full, by being always extricating himself from some present difficulty, that he has not time to reflect, that though men will bear some hardships into which they are surprised, they may be roused by repeated injuries.

They tell me most incredible whimsies of him. Among the rest, that he shall take a book of humour and ridicule, and take upon him to draw out a scheme of politics hid under those seeming pleasantries. A notable money-scriver has informed me, that his knighthood has conceived a mighty opinion of South Sea Stock, not from the rational and solid security that is given

to support the interest thereof, but from the following memorable passage in the 94th page of a book called *A Tale of a Tub*. Most people agree that that piece was written for the advancement of religion only; but Sir Anthony, who sees more and less than any other man living, will have it to be a collection of politics; and the paragraph upon which he grounds his conception of the fund above-mentioned, is as follows.

'The first undertaking of Lord Peter was to purchase a large continent, lately said to have been discovered in Terra Australis Incognita. This tract of land he bought a very great pennyworth from the discoverers themselves, (though some pretend to doubt whether they had ever been there) and then retailed it into several cantons to certain dealers, who carried over colonies, but were all shipwrecked in the voyage. Upon which Lord Peter sold the said continent to other customers again and again, and again and again with the same success.

Mr. Myrtle, if you publish this ribaldry I now send you, be sure you chuse the day auspicious to the Crabtrees, to wit, the first of April, a day wherein, time out of mind, people have thought fit to divert themselves with passing upon their neighbours nonsense and imposition for wit and art. But to go on. In order to amass a vast sum of money, which he designs to place in the fund, the benefits of which are so mysteriously described in the above-mentioned political discourse, Sir Anthony has resolved to part with the most valuable manuscripts in his library, which are actually sent to town to be sold on the said first day of April, and catalogues given gratis to all the fellows of the Royal Society. The things which he expects most for, are as follows. *Faber Camolanthi's Rudiments of Letters*; being the first scrawls made by the said Camolanthi with his own hand, before the invention of writing, wherein is to be seen the first B that ever was made.

The second curiosity is the very *white Wax* which John a Gant had in his hand when he made the famous conveyance by an overt act of biting, and the following words:

In witness that this is sooth,
I bite the white wax with my tooth.

The third is an *Egyptian Mummy*,
very

very fresh, and fit to be kept as a predecessor to any house which is so antient as to have lost the records of it's ancestry.

The fourth is the first halloved Slipper which was kissed in honour of St. Peter, who is reported by heretics to have worn none at all himself, but to have gone a fishing barefoot. It would be endless to tell you all circumstances of these prodigious fellows, but Zachariah and Brickduft are gone post to London to vouch for these antiquities. Zachariah, Sir Anthony says, has a very good countenance to stand by the Mummy at the sale, as well as to vouch for the white wax in the conveyance. I don't know what they may do with you Londoners, but they have quite lost themselves at Gotham, and the twelve wise men are ashamed of them; upon which the Crabtrees say they will have twelve others, but this is supposed to be only a bounce; for the Gothamites begin to perceive, though too late, that the Crabtrees are not such cunning curs as they pretend; but are at the bottom fools, though they set up for the other character. I suppose you must have heard the story of the Book-man: falling upon that inconsiderable fellow has explained them more than any thing that ever happened; and Sir Anthony, by all intelligent people, was reckoned a Cudden for meddling with him; for, say they, there were a thousand ways of getting rid of him; and it was not worth doing it, whatever chastisement they might put him to, at the rate of exposing themselves and their affairs to the examination which that impotent vengeance brought upon them.

Thus the Crabtrees, who indeed never had sense, have now lost the appearance of it; and Sir Anthony, for these ten days last past, could not get any body to whisper him: when he offers it, the party attempted stands full before

him; and there you see poor Sir Anthony, in a need to whisper, jerking and writhing his noddle, and begging an audience of a starrer, who stands in the posture of a man stiff with amazement, that he had not found him out before. If you'll turn to the next page to that I quoted above, to wit, the next to the 94th, (which phrase I own I steal from Juvenal's *Volueris à prima quæ proxima*) you will find that Sir Anthony stole the manner of his Levy from Lord Peter's invention of erecting a whispering office, for the public good and ease of all—*eves-droppers, physicians, midwives, small politicians, friends fallen out, repeating poets, lovers happy or in despair, barwds, privy counsellors, pages, parasites, and buffoons.*—*An ass's head was placed so conveniently, that the party might easily with his mouth accept either of the animal's ears.* The other parts of that paragraph are too coarse to be repeated. Sir Anthony is mightily afraid his dear relations will hardly get safe back again to him; and therefore, like the country fellow who said, It was pity there was not an act of parliament against all foreigners that should pretend to invade this land, he has given them a pass which he thinks will be of as much force all over England, as it would lately have been in this county, where he is a justice. There is one particular pleasant clause in it, wherein he requires all people, notwithstanding their looks, to let them pass for honest men.

Zachariah disputed carrying that clause, and said, he was sure nobody could take him for any other; but Sir Anthony over-ruled him, and, in his sneering way, said, It could do him no harm to have it about him. Which is all at present, from the most unfortunate of lovers,

RICARDETTO LANGUENTI.

N^o XVII. SATURDAY, APRIL 3.

WHO TAUGHT THE PARROT HUMAN NOTES TO TRY,
OR WITH A VOICE ENDU'D THE CHATT'RING PIE?

'TWAS WITTY WANT, PIERCE HUNGER TO APPEASE:

WANT TAUGHT THEIR MASTERS, AND THEIR MASTERS THESE.

DRYDEN'S PERIUS.

MRS. Anne Page was smiling very graciously upon me, in a dream, between seven and eight yesterday morning, when three thundering knocks at my door drove the fair image from my fancy, as Diana was hurried to the moon by the cymbals and trumpets of Hercules. My servant came up to me while I was cursing the rude hand that had disturbed me, and delivered me a letter, which was given him, as he said, by a lusty fresh-coloured young man in an embroidered coat, who promised to call upon me, two days hence, at the same hour. The dread of such another noise made me break open the letter with some precipitation.

MR. MYRTLE,

MY story, in short, is this. My father kept me under, after I came from school, and snubbed me consumedly, till I was five and twenty; and then he died, and left me three thousand *per annum*. I came to London this winter, where I am to be married to a fine young lady, when I can get her in the mind. But, I don't know how, there is no pleasing of her. She hath made my heart ache so often, that I have resolved to follow somebody else; but she hath such a way with her eyes, that I cannot do without her. When I first came to town, I heard she should say, how that I was so *rough*! Upon which I shaved every day, and washed my hands once in half an hour, for a week together. Being informed, that she hoped I might be *polished* in time, I got a broad French beaver, and an embroidered coat, that cost me three-score pounds. I cannot, indeed, blame her for complaining that I have no *taste*, for I have lost my stomach; and I entirely agree with her that I want *air*, for I am almost choaked in this smoaky town. But this is not all. She hath given out, that she wishes I would travel; and she told me, no longer since than yesterday, that the man she married should make the *tour* of Italy.

Now, Sir, I would be at any expence, in building, to please her; but as for going into outlandish countries, I thank her for that. In short, she would have me out of the way: for, you must know, there is a little snipper-snapper from Oxford, that is mightily in her books. I don't know how it comes to pass, but, though he hath but a plain grey suit, he hath such a fawning way with him, that my mind misgives me plausibly. He hath words at his fingers ends; and I can say nothing, but he has some answer or another that puts me out; and yet he talks so, that one cannot be angry neither. He always reads your Lovers to her; and I hear her say often, that she should like such an ingenious man as Mr. Myrtle. Now, what I desire is your advice; for, as I told you before, I cannot do without her. I am a hearty fellow; and, believe me, if you do me any good, you shall have gloves, and dance at my wedding. Your humble servant to command.

TIMOTHY GUBBIN.

It falls out very luckily, that I can recommend Mr. Gubbin to a person for his purpose, without further risking my own repose. The following letter, which I received a week ago, shall serve for an answer to his. And I further declare, that I constitute the author thereof my Esquire, according to the prayer of his petition. I have accordingly assigned him an apartment in the Lover's Lodge; and shall further encourage him, as I find his merits answerable to his pretensions.

LAUNCELOT BAYS TO MARMADUKE MYRTLE.

COURTEOUS KNIGHT,

AS you are a professor and patron of Love, I throw myself at your feet to beg a boon of you. When I have told you my story, you will confess that I am the

the most amorous and chaste of swains. I am, Sir, by profession, an author, and the scene of my labours is a garret. My genius leads me to love, and I have a gentle manner. When I have occasion for money, I fancy to myself a lady, and write such soft things, as you would bless yourself to hear. But living at present in the city, where such ware fetches but little, I shall, without your assistance, fall shortly into great poverty of imagination. Would you believe it, Sir? I have lived this month on a posy for a ring.

My request is, that I may be transplanted from this barren soil into Covent Garden. My greatest ambition is to be received in the quality of Esquire to so courteous a knight as you are; to carry your pen in this your gentle warfare, and do the squirely offices established in this order of chivalry. You may not, perhaps, find me unqualified to take some drudgeries off your hands, which you must otherwise undergo; and may possibly appoint me sub-tutor to the British savages, before they approach the fair. It is thought sufficient, that the taylor and dancing-master have managed an awkward body at his first coming to town: nay, upon the strength of a box of *fine Myrtle Barcelona*, a young fellow, now-a-days, sets up for love and gallantry. The ill success of such unformed cavaliers makes a person of my talents necessary in a civilized country. You know, the ladies will be attacked in form, before they listen to terms; and, though they do not absolutely insist upon hanging or drowning, they think it but decent that such attempts be made in rhyme and sonnet. I believe you will agree with me, that no woman of spirit thinks a man hath any respect for her, till he hath played the fool in her service; and the mean opinion that sex hath of a poet, makes any thing in metre, from a lover, an agreeable sacrifice to their vanity.

Now, since there are few heads turned both for dress and politeness, since witty sayings seldom break out from two rows of fine teeth, and true spelling is not often the work of a pretty hand; I propose, for the good of my country, to set up a toy-shop of written baubles, and poetical trinkets. The perfumes of flattery, the cordials of vows, the salts of wit, and the washes of panegyric, are ranged in due order, and placed in pro-

per receptacles to be retailed out at reasonable prices. Here the spark may be furnished with satirical lashes, when he has lost his clouded cane. Here he may purchase points, conceits, and repartees, as useful against an enemy as the nicest pushes his fencing-master can teach him. The most graceful bow he can learn, shall be still improved by a compliment I can put in his mouth; and, to say no more, his periwig shall by my means be the least valuable thing upon his shoulders.

No generous lover will repine at my good fortune, when he hears that I get a warm coat by that which gains him the embraces of a bride. While he feasts all his senses, I shall content myself with the luxury of some meat, and much drink. Thus an equal distribution will be made of worldly pleasures. As they become undoubtedly happy, I shall grow undoubtedly fat: hearts will be at rest, and duns be paid.

The following list of my wares I desire you to advertize; which will not fail, I hope, to bring customers, and may lay a foundation for the commerce of love in this trading island.

LOVE-LETTERS and Sonnets, by the quire, at five Guineas the Prose, and ten the Verse; with allowance to those that buy quantities.

A sett of Rhymes, ready paired for any ordinary Amour; never used but twice.

The Art of Pleasing; or, Rules for Defamation; with a compleat Index.

An Apology for the Colour of a Lady's Hair; with a Word or two in defence of white Eye-lashes.

A Treatise for, and another against, growing Fat. Sharp Sayings against Faults which People cannot help; with Answers to each.

A Compliment for a Masque, and a Repartee for a Rival. Neither even spoken before.

An Invektive against embroidered Coats, for the Use of younger Brothers; to which is added, an Appendix concerning Fringed Gloves.

A List of the Heathen Goddesses, with the Colour of their Hair and Eyes; for the Assistance of young Gentlemen that were never at the University.

Double Entendres, and Feeling Language, collected from the Works of the

the most celebrated Poetesses of the Age.

Vows for young Virgins, to be sold by Number; and Flattery for Old Maids, by Weight.

Raptures, Transports, and Exclamations, at a Crown a Dozen.

Turtles, Fountains, Grottoes, Forests, Roles, Tigresses, Rocks, and Nightingales, at common Prices.

N^o XVIII. TUESDAY, APRIL 6.

PARVA LEVIS CAPIUNT ANIMOS.

OVID.

I Was the other night in the box of the gallery at Sir Courtly Nice, a comedy I never miss, for the sake of the knight himself, Hothead and Testimony, all parts in themselves very diverting, and excellently performed by the actors. Sir Courtly's character exposes, to an extravagance, those shallow creatures, whose imaginations are wholly taken up with form and outside, and labour only at an excellence in indifferent things. To utter the words, *Your humble servant*, and bow with a different air each time they are repeated, makes up his whole part in as pleasant a scene as any of the comedy. This puts me a musing upon the force of being able to act fashionably in ordinary occasions, and filling up their part of the room with a tolerable good air, while there is nothing passing which engages the attention of the assembly or company to any one other point. It is monstrous to observe how few amongst us are able to do it, till half their life is passed away, and then, at last, they rather get over it as a thing they neglect, than behave themselves in it as a thing they have ever regarded. This matter is no where so conspicuous as in an assembly of men of parts, when they are got together upon any great point; as at the College of Physicians, the Royal Society, or any other place where you have had an opportunity of seeing a good many English gentlemen together. I have been mightily at a loss whether this proceeds from a too great respect for themselves, or too great deference to others; but it seems to be partly one, partly 't'other. Whatever the cause is, I have often seen the effect to a very great degree of pleasantry. You shall, in the instant a man is going to speak, see him stunt himself, and not rise within three inches of his natural height, but lean on one side, as if taken with a sudden sciatica; and 'tis ten to one whether he recovers, without danger of falling quite down with shifting legs; and I have known it, when a

very ingenious gentleman has tried both his legs, almost to tripping himself up, and then caught at himself with his arms in the air, turned pale, and finding by this time all his speech stared out of his head by a set of ill-natured curs that rejoiced in his confusion, sat down in a silence not to be broken during his life. There is no man knows, till he has tried, how prodigious tall he himself is: he cannot be let into this till he has attempted to speak in public; when he first does it, in an instant, from sitting to standing up, the air is as much too fine for him, as if he had been conveyed to the top of the Alps. You see him gasp, heave, and struggle, like an animal in an air pump, till he falls down into his seat; but enjoys his health well enough ever after, provided he can hold his tongue. If the intended orator stand upon the floor, I have seen him miscarry by taking only too large a step forward; and then, in the air of a beggar who is recommending himself with a lame leg, speak such bold truths, as have had an effect just equal to the assurance with which they were uttered. A too great regard for doing what you are about with a good grace, destroys your capacity of doing it at all; but if men would place their ambition first upon the virtue of the action, and attempt things only because it is their duty to attempt them, grace of action and becoming behaviour would naturally attend truth of heart and honesty of design; but when their imaginations are bent only upon recommending themselves, or imposing upon others, there is no wonder that they are seized with such awkward directions in the midst of their vanity or falsehood. I remember, when I was a young fellow, there was a young man of quality that became an accomplished orator in one day. The circumstance was this: A gentleman who had chastised a Russian for an insolence towards a kinswoman of his, was

F attacked

attacked with outrageous language in that assembly. When his friend's name was ill treated from man to man, this ingenious youth discovered the utmost pain to those that sat near him; and having more than once said, 'I am sure I could fight for him; why can't I speak for him?' at last stood up. The eyes of the whole company were upon him; and though he appeared to have utterly forgot what he rose up to speak, yet the generous motive which the whole company knew he acted upon, procured him such an acclamation of voices to hear him, that he expressed himself with a magnanimity and clearness, proceeding from the integrity of his heart, that made his very adversaries receive him as a man they wished their friend. I mention this circumstance to show, that the best way to do a thing as you ought, is to do it only because you ought. This thing happened soon after the Restoration, and I remember a set of fellows, they called the new Converts, were the chief speakers. It is true, they always spoke against their conscience; but having been longer used to do so in public, (as all are gifted at their meetings) they excelled all other prostitutes in firm countenances and stiff bodies. They were indeed ridiculous, but they could bear to be ridiculous, and carried their points by having their consciences seared, while those of others lay bleeding. But I am got into chat upon circumstances of a higher nature than those of ordinary life, compliment and ceremony. I was speaking of Sir Courtly's *Your humble Servant, Madam.*

As for my part, I always approve rather those who make the most of a little understanding, and carry that as far as they can, than those who will not condescend to be perfect, if I may so speak, in the under parts of their character. Mrs. Page said very justly of me one day, (for you must know I am as mute as a fish in her presence) 'If Mr. Myrtle can't speak for love, and his mistress can't speak out of decency, their affair must end as it begun, only in dumb shew.' I have a cousin at the university who lately made me a visit; I know him to want no learning, wit, or sense, if he would please to dispense it to us by retail. He can make an oration or write a poem, but won't let us have any thing of his in small parcels. He is come, indeed, to bear our raillying him upon

it, without being surly. I asked him, if he should talk with a man who had a whole language except the conjunctions copulative, how would he be able to understand him?—Small matters it is absolutely necessary to capacitate ourselves for; great occasions do not occur every moment. The Jew said very prettily, in defence of his frequent superstitious washings, and the like outward services, 'I do these because I have not always opportunities to manifest my devotion in acts of virtue.' I had abundance to do to make my cousin open his mouth at all. He and I, one evening, had sat together three hours without uttering a syllable. I was resolved to say nothing till he began the discourse; but finding the silence endless, I desired him to go down with me from my Lodge, and walk with me in the Piazza. We took two or three turns there in the dark, in utter silence; at last, said I to him, 'Cousin Tom, this taciturnity of thine, considering the sex? I know thou hast in thee, is a vexation I can no longer endure with patience: we are now in the dark, and I can't see how you do it; but here, give me your hand, let me, while I hold you here, intreat you to exercise the use of your lips and tongue, and oblige me so far as to utter, with as much vehemence as you can, the word *Coach*.' My youth took my friendship as I intended it, and, as well as he could, in a laughing voice he cried, 'C-o-a-c-h!'—'Very well, cousin, says I, 'try if you can speak it at once; with which he began to cry, 'Coach! coach!' pulling himself out of my hand. 'No,' says I, 'cousin, you shall not go till you are perfect; with that he called loudly and distinctly, inasmuch that we had in an instant all the coaches from Will's and Tom's about the Portico or Little Piazza. The fellows began to call names, as thinking themselves abused, since no one came to take coach; upon which, one cried out, 'What rascals are those in the Piazza?'—'You scoundrels,' said I, 'what are you good for but to keep your horses and selves in exercise? Would you stare and stand idle at coffee-house doors all night?' I went on with great fluency, in the language those chariotteers usually meet with; upon which they came down, armed with whips, and my cousin complaining his sword was borrowed of another college, and would not draw, wondered

wondered I would bring myself and him into such a scrape. He had not done speaking, before a whip-lash took him on the cheek; upon which my young gentleman snatched my cane out of my hand, and found every limb about him as well as his tongue. I stood by him with all my might, and would fain have brought it to that, that my cousin might be carried before a justice, by way of exercise in different circumstances, rather

than go on the insipid, dull, useless thing, which an unmanly bashfulness had made him; but he improved daily after this adventure of the coachmen, and can be rough and civil as properly, and with as good an air, as any gentleman in town. In a word, his actions are genteel, manly, and voluntary, which he owes to the confidence into which I at first betrayed him, by the silly adventure I have now related.

Nº XIX. THURSDAY, APRIL 8.

—QUID DECEAT, NON VIDET ULLUS AMANS. OVID.

I Shall be mightily in arrear with my correspondents, if I do not, for some time, appoint one day in the week to take into consideration their epistles.

The first that falls into my hands, out of a bundle before me, is from an unhappy man who is fallen in love, but knows not with whom. Take his case from his own epistle.

MR. MYRTLE, APRIL 3, 1714.

I Am a young gentleman of a moderate fortune, have spent the greatest part of my time for these two or three years last past in what they call seeing the town; but am now resolved to marry, and forsake that unsettled kind of life. My thoughts are at present divided between two sisters; and as they are both amiable, I can't as yet determine which to make my address to, but must beg your advice in this critical posture of affairs. Lucinda has sense enough, is very handsome, and excellently well shaped; her eyes command respect from all who behold them: it is impossible to see and not adore her; the dances to the greatest perfection imaginable; and is, in short, every way so well accomplished, that her charms would be irresistible, had she not too great a mixture of pride, and did not self-admiration, in some measure, obscure the lustre of her beauty. Celia is not so handsome as her sister, yet is very pretty: when she talks, she captivates her hearers, yet seems wholly ignorant at the same time of her own charms; and when the eyes of the whole company are fixed on her, she, with all the innocence in the world, seems to wonder at their attention, and rather apprehends that some defect in her person or conversation, than any perfection in either, is the cause of

their earnest observance. When I am with Celia, her agreeable easy conversation and good-humour ravish my soul, and 'tis then I resolve with myself to fix my thoughts on her alone; but when Lucinda approaches, all my resolutions vanish, and I'm Celia's no longer. I have endeavoured to search into my own thoughts as nicely as possible, and have at last discovered that 'tis Lucinda I admire, but Celia I love. I would therefore beg your advice which I ought to chuse; her, that by the delicacy of her face and shape, and stateliness of her mien and air, enforces my adoration; or her, that by the agreeableness of her good-humour and conversation, engages my love. An answer to this will be very acceptable to your humble servant,

CHARLES DOUBT.

The circumstance of this gentleman puts me in mind of a paper of verses in Sir John Suckling, upon two sisters, whose beauties were so equal and so alike, that they distracted the choice and approbation of their beholders. While the eyes of their admirers were taken up in comparing their several beauties, their hearts were safe by being unresolved on which of the two to fix. That witty author on this occasion concludes,

He sure is happiest that has hopes of either,
Next him is he that sees them both together.

My correspondent has not told me, that he has not easy access to both his young ladies; while he enjoys that, I cannot but propose the expedient of seeing them both together, as an effectual method towards coming to a determination in this case, though it had the contrary effect in the case of the sisters reported

by Suckling. If my correspondent has stated the matter right, Celia will gain ground of Lucinda; for beauty palls by intimate conversation, but good-humour and affability gain new strength the more frequently they discover themselves. I expect this correspondent, provided he goes into my method, should give me an account how he finds himself, that I may note it in my book of receipts.

The next gentleman, I find, is extremely high in his fever, for he starts from one thing to another in the present hurry of his spirits, and makes it impossible for me to give any regular judgment of his condition. I find he is but lately fallen into it, and I must observe his future letters very attentively, before I can be able to prescribe any thing for his recovery. It is the nature of his disease, in the first place, that the patients think every man delighted with their ravings. The stile of the letter seems to me to be that which the learned in love distinguish by the Sublime Unintelligible; but take it from himself.

As I should

OH! MR. MYRTLE,

HAD you seen her for whom my heart breathes this moment, your Anne Page had been as utterly no more as Cleopatra who ruined Anthony, or Statira who captivated Alexander! Headless man that I was—but what could wisdom have availed me, after seeing her! As she is fair, she is also inexorable. Alas! that what moves passion should also be a check to our desires; and how miserable is his fate, who conceives despair from the merit of what inspires his admiration! Oh, dear Sir! send me your advice, but I am sure I can't follow it; and I shall not have time to shew you how much I am your humble servant, though I know I shall be yours till death.

To be sure CINTHIO LANGUISSANTE.

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I shall end to-day's work with this notable piece of complaint from poor Tim. Gubbin, whose lamentation you must take in his own words.

MR. MYRTLE,

SINCE I writ to you last, I have visited this gentlewoman that I told you of, and whom I cannot be without every day in the week, except Sundays. You cannot imagine how very proud she is, and scornful, though at the same time she knows that I am better born than herself; but she loves none but dissemblers. The young spark, who I complained to you was so much in her favour, told her such a parcel of lyes' other day, that I told him to his face I wondered he was not ashamed on it. You must know, I believe most of what he says is out of a book. I am loth to be quarrelsome; but if he talks, and makes a jest of me any longer, as I find he does, I'll make him understand that I am as good a scholar at the rapier as himself. I only speak it to you as a case of conscience, and ask you the question, Whether, if a man has more wit than I, and uses it against me, I may not use what I think I have more than he against him? Therefore, if I may have your leave, I would try my young spark about the business of courage. I have told my mistress as much; but I don't know what she means, but I think she has as mad a way of talking as he, and says, the way to win her is to die for her myself; and, if I won't do that, not to interrupt people who are better bred than myself, who are willing to die for her. Pr'ythee, Mr. Myrtle, tell me what all this means; for, though I have a very good estate, I am as unhappy as if I were not worth a groat, and all for this proud minx. I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

TIMOTHY GUBBIN.

N° XX. SATURDAY, APRIL 10.

SHE DROPT A TEAR, AND SIGNING SEEM'D TO SAY,
YOUNG MAIDENS, MARRY! MARRY, WHILE YOU MAY!

FLATMAN.

I Am apt to believe the circumstances of the following letter are unfeigned, and therefore shall not labour to make them more entertaining by fabulous ornaments. I shall have, I dare say,

enough to do in the progress of the matter, to shew my skill in Love; therefore, let the following letter lie before the town, as a plain narrative of what, I fear, will have more incidents in it than it should have,

Have, were I myself either the son or the father in the narration. I appeal to the tea-tables on the matter.

DEAR MR. MYRTLE,

I Have long had a secret (and I hope no criminal) ambition to appear in your writings, and an equal desire to be under your direction. If, therefore, you have kindness enough to gratify the vanity of an enamoured female (who has a mind to be admired in coffee-houses, and is willing to believe that, by a little of your management, she may make a tolerable figure among your Lovers) and to convince the world that you are resolved to be as good as your word, by your readiness to give your sage advice to those who need it, and humbly sue for it; I earnestly intreat you to print me off to-morrow, and, at the same time, to publish your opinion of the following case: for the gentleman who, next myself, is more concerned in it, has perused the letter I now presume to send you, and has positively declared he will stand to your determination.

Mr. Careless is a gentleman of the Middle Temple: he was sent thither very young to study the law. He has a vivacity in all his words and actions, which has acquired him the esteem and good graces of a great many of our sex. This kind of happiness made him entirely neglect the chief design which brought him up to London. Coke upon Littleton grew mouldy and dusty in his solitary study, while he shined among the ladies in his coat turned up with velvet, and negligently graced with oil and powder. He better knew how to write a billet-doux than to engross a bill, and he was much more expert in repeating scraps of plays than in wording a petition. A certain art he has of saying the most common things after an extraordinary manner, was of very great use to him in effectually recommending him to those ladies who are fond of that kind of innocent mirth which keeps virtue always in danger, and consequently alarmed, and not in a stupid security which tends neither to virtue nor vice.—But, alas! where am I going?—I ask ten thousand pardons, dear Mr. Myrtle, for this long preamble. What I am going to consult you in is this: I am a young woman who have been but fourteen these three years past, though to you I may venture to

own, that I was six and twenty the first day of May last. My father was an officer in the army, and though pretty well stricken in years, yet no man was a greater encourager of mirth and diversion than himself. This turn of humour in the good old man, made him extremely pleased with Mr. Careless; and, unless the business of his family required his more serious attention, he thought his hours passed slowly on, if young Careless happened to be absent from our house. This gentleman's close intimacy with my father gave him frequent opportunities of being in my company; and he has often, in gaiety of heart, called me his Maria, his mistress, his charmer; and has told me a thousand times over he was in love with me, in a way which goes for no more than—*Madam, I like your company*. However, Mr. Myrtle, you, who seem no stranger to the weaknesses incident to our sex, can't but imagine that a single woman, and no professed enemy to matrimony, was not displeased at such like declarations from a pretty fellow that was young, lively, brisk, and did not want wit. Though he was thus agreeable, and I neither insensible of his perfections, nor displeased at his addresses to me, yet my modesty laid too great a restriction on me, to permit me to discover to him at first the secret satisfaction I took in hearing him praise me, and how I was delighted when I listened to the declaration of his passion. What he prattled at last began to dwell upon me; I grew afraid that all his professions of this nature were mere amusements to him; till one evening, when we were all very merry in the parlour, dancing country dances, and playing plays, he said something to me in secret, which I fear I shall all my life wish I had never heard.

I remember we were engaged at a play called *Servants and Mistresses*, when, among the variety of gentlemen which were given me to chuse out of, I pitched upon Mr. Careless, as a gentleman the most agreeable to my fancy of any in the company. Upon which he rose up, made me a very modest and respectful bow; and when, according to the custom of the play, he had given a very graceful, and methought somewhat awful salute, he whispered me, and wished, with a sigh, that he might be so happy as to be my choice in earnest—I hear
the

the words still tingle in my ear. I stole my eye towards Mr. Careless the whole night after; and if he happened to compliment any of the ladies, I took particular notice of her countenance; I could not help thinking her very ugly, and that she did not at all deserve to have any thing said in her praise: if he smiled at my cousin, who was tolerably handsome, I was ready to cry; and when, in a fondling manner, he took my sister Sally on his knee, methought my poor heart grew as heavy as lead. Well! certainly my inquietudes all that night are not, and to Mr. Myrtle need not, to be described—But, Mr. Myrtle, to make short of my story, by mutual endearments, and a reciprocal desire to please, Mr. Careless and I, from that time forward, became lovely and agreeable in each other's eyes. I thought myself happy in his company; and a sight of him never failed to fill me with the most ravishing delight. He would often discourse to me of marriage, and long till he was of age, that he might have me all his own. I conversed with him as with the man who was to have been my companion for life. I seldom dressed but on the day I expected a visit from him. Thus we lived and loved, for some months, till the malicious world talked of our behaviour, and made Mr. Careless's father acquainted with our whole proceedings. He sends for his son. Oh, Mr. Myrtle, how shall I describe my concern for his departure! I dreaded his father's power over him, and trembled when I considered that his father, who was able to leave him a good fortune, might possibly awe him into a neglect of me. Mr. Careless leaves me in London, in obedience to his father's command. As soon as he got home, he sent me word his father severely menaced him, and swore solemnly he would not leave him a groat if he continued to love me, or entertained the least thought of making me his wife.

In Mr. Careless's absence my father and mother both died, and I survived them an orphan of a very slender fortune. Mr. Careless writes a second letter, wherein he lets me know, that his father persists in his resolution; however, he assures me, that if I pleased he would post to London unknown to the old man, and there marry me. I now had a difficult card to play. I reasoned

thus; that if I took Mr. Careless at his word, I should thereby prove the unhappy instrument of making him guilty of disobedience, and, by incurring his father's displeasure, put his fortune in danger. I thought it would be no argument of my affection to involve the young man I pretended to love, in these dangers. After some struggle, my passion gave way to prudence, and I resolved to lose my lover, rather than take him at the expence of his fame or discretion. After I had wept heartily, I wrote him a letter in the stile of one who had never loved; I told him I believed it most advisable to lay aside the thoughts of a match which was attended with many difficulties, and could not but prove a very disadvantageous one to him, and, if his father remained irreconcilable, to me too. Mr. Careless followed my advice, he commended my freedom, ceased to be my lover, but continued to be my friend ever since.

Mr. Careless is now at age, unmarried, and has attained to a plentiful fortune without the assistance of his father: I am still unprovided for, and confess Mr. Careless is this moment as much master of my heart as ever. Dear Mr. Myrtle, be speedy in your determination, and say what you think should be Mr. Careless's sentiments towards me. I wait with impatience for to-morrow's paper, which is seriously to determine the fate of your constant reader,

PRUDENCE LOVESICK.

It is a very hazardous point to determine a matter attended with such nice circumstances: but supposing the facts are honestly stated, if the father of Careless has any taste of merit, he ought to give his consent to a lady to whom he owes so generous a refusal of his son, rather than be his daughter, when it was incommensurable to the circumstances of his family. If an accession of wealth is thrown in, which ought to be accounted as a portion sent by Providence to take off all prudential objections that stood between the young lady and her happiness, I won't say what the son should do; but if the father does his duty, it will have the same good effect on the lovers. Till that is refused, I shall not play the casuist in a case wherein no one can err, but with a guilt which cannot but be obvious to any man who has the least sense of humanity.

N° XXI. TUESDAY, APRIL 13.

NATIO COMÆDA EST

JUV.

IN hopes that people will trouble me no more with accounts of the Crabtrees, I have admitted the following letter, though I am sick of a people so eminently made the objects of the contrary passion to that of love.

SIR,

I Read in your paper, the other day, the letter of Richardetto Languenti, concerning the ridiculous and mischievous race of the Crabtrees. I must confess I never thought words better put together or applied, than mischievous and ridiculous, for that unaccountable, lamentable, detestable, and every other word ending in able, under tolerable. You may see, Sir, by the hand in which I write, that I am a woman; and by the stile and passion, that I am an angry woman: at the same time, I don't know whether I may write myself Woman, only because I am of the age of twenty-nine, since I am still a maid; but I am sure I should have been a woman before now, if it had not been for this disagreeable, I would say execrable race of the Crabtrees. As fast, and as well as my passion will let me, I will give you an account of my sufferings.

I am the daughter of a gentleman of 400l. a year, who has several other children. Sir Anthony always giving himself out for a great friend to the landed interest, as he calls it, has ever been in great credit with my father. To find portions, maintenance, and education, for a numerous family, my father has practised that natural improvement of a country gentleman's estate, grazing cattle, and driving them to the market of London. He dealt for the whole with one eminent butcher in St. James's Market, with whom he accounts once a year, and takes the payments which are made to the said butcher in balance of their accounts. You must know there is a great lady in that neighbourhood, eminent for her justice and charity, who uses Sir Anthony as her steward: the knight has got a great estate by oppressing her tenants, and terrifying all people in her service with his great power in her. The lady above-mentioned owed my father's correspond-

ent, the butcher, a sum of money, which was to have been my fortune in marriage with an agreeable young man, the son of a neighbouring gentleman. My father had so great a respect for this lady, that he engaged himself to take any demands upon her in payment without the least scruple. By Sir Anthony's management, a third part of the lady's debt to the butcher is paid in a coin I never heard of before, called Tin Tallies. My father has written to Sir Anthony, and offered them to Zachariah his brother, they being out of my father's way to know what to do with; but Zachariah has told the poor butcher, who carried my father's letter, and written to my father, that he can't meddle with them; but has gravely advised him to stick to the landed interest, and not mind projects, for so the half-witted impudent wretch calls receiving money for the product of his land. Thus, Sir, I have lost a good husband by this trick of Sir Anthony, and the whole race of them wonder why our family curses them; but, Sir, it is the nature of the Crabtrees to be blind to the evils they themselves commit, and don't think themselves guilty of mischiefs, wherein they are the original causes, except they are the immediate instruments. These gross abuses the graceless crew, by bragging of their power, have committed against all the world without being found out and thoroughly explained; till the devil, who owed them a shame, prompted them to meddle with those that could draw their pictures. I owned to you, in the beginning of this letter, that I was an angry woman; and I think I have made it out that I have reason for it. I have nothing now left to divert my poor aching heart from reflection upon it's disappointment, but gratifying my resentment against the infamous cause of it. When I reflect upon this race, especially the knight himself, I confess my anger is immediately turned into mirth; for how is it possible that an ungainly creature, who has what he is writ in his face, should impose upon any body? He looks so like a cheat, that he passes upon people who do not know him from no other

other advantage in the world, but that they are ashamed to be governed by so silly an art as physiognomy. With this mischievous aspect, there is something so awkward, so little, and briskly comic, in Sir Anthony's mien and air, that one would think the contempt of his figure might save people from the iniquity of his designs; but Sir Anthony has the happiness next to a good reputation, which is to be insensible of shame, and therefore is as smug as he is ugly. Forgive me personal reflections, but ugly is a woman's word for knavish. I observe, Sir, you affect putting the sentence of some poet, English or Latin, at the top of your paper; and as I desire you would let my letter be as remarkable as possible, I beg you to put these words out of Sir John Suckling's play of the Sad One, at the head of this my writing, except you would put in all my letter, which I had much rather you would: the place of Sir J. Suckling will agree well enough with the knight; for tho' his name is Anthony, and Suckling has used the word Robin, every one of this country will think him meant, when you do but say, 'The Sad One,' for such indeed he is. The passage is thus: A poet and an actor are introduced discoursing about characters in a play. The actor is telling the author, that he wonders why he will represent what cannot be in nature, an honest lawyer. 'Why,' says Multicarni, (that is the name of the poet) 'Dost think it impossible for a lawyer to be honest?' The actor answers—

- * As 'tis for a lord-treasurer to be poor,
- * Or for a king not to be cozened:
- * There's little Robin, in debt within these
 three years,
- * Grown fat and full—

As for using the word Treasurer instead of Steward, there is nothing in that: for Sir Anthony, in a sneering way, calls himself so; and pretends he deserves that word more than any one else who ever served her, though it's well known he has disparaged her more than any one that ever served any body: and my father says, since he has got me and the tin tallies lying upon his hands, that he will send you an account, wherein he will prove, that if she had given him a year's income of all she has in the world to have nothing to say to him, she had saved above a year's revenue by it. But there is no dealing with him; he has got all

the country to call the honest man, who managed her business before him, all the names that malice could invent; so that, whenever he is dismissed, he knows he cannot be worse used than the best men have been before him. Thus Sir Anthony thinks himself secure against defamation; first, because he deserves all the ill that can be said of him; and, secondly, because the same thing has been said of those who deserve all the praise which language can bestow. I have a great deal more to say of the ugly creature; but I had like to have forgot Brickduft and Zachariah. You must know they have different apartments about Sir Anthony's house, to examine every one who comes for money, or admit their accounts. These animals, if possible, are more hideous than Sir Anthony himself: they are both in town; and they are as much desired in the country, as their arrival in it formerly was feared and dreaded. The Presbyterian ministers in these parts have a very pleasant tale of Zachariah, who, it seems, was made a trustee in a donation for ministers dissenting from the Church of England. The description of ministers dissenting from the Church of England suits as well with Nonjurors as Dissenters; and Zachariah being a new convert, forsooth, to the church, has a pious compassion rather for those who were of our church, and are gone higher, than to those who will not come up to it; and therefore, out of scruple of conscience cheats the Dissenters. I desire you would be sure to print this, because it would be well that the truth were known; for some do not fail to say, that under the notion of it's being a gift to pious uses, Zachariah has reserved it for that good Christian himself. When Zachariah went through the town of Worcester—but that is a long story—I had like to have forgot Brickduft; but what signifies talking of him? I remember a whimsical saying of one speaking of a silly creature with a manly aspect; he called him a Coal-black Silly Fellow; so I say Brickduft is a Soft Ugly Cur: he has a phiz fit only for accusation and abuse; if he designed to commend, it would have that effect; and it is nonsense for you to set up for a Lover, when you let these creatures go about to frighten women with child, and bear false witness against honest men. I fear I have said more than will come within your paper; but pray don't leave any of it out, for my lover was a very pretty fellow, and

was forced to leave me because of these cursed tallies. I am, dear Mr. Myrtle, very much your servant,

SUSAN MATCHLESS.

MR. MYRTLE,

I Beg the favour of you to acquaint the town, that in the most necessary earthen ware, I have, with great pains and

curiosity, wrought round the exterior superficies of them, the true effigies of Sir Anthony Crabtree, Mr. Zachariah Crabtree, and Mr. Peter Brickduft. They will be sold at all potters shops within London and Westminster on the 19th instant, and country customers may have them at a cheaper rate.

RUBENS CLAYWRIGHT.

N° XXII. THURSDAY, APRIL 15.

SECRETUM ITER ———

HOR.

THE business of Love alters in every family in England; and, I must confess, I did not sufficiently weigh the great perplexity that I should fall into, from the vast variety of cases, when I undertook my present province. The author of the following letters is in very whimsical circumstances, which will be best represented by his epistles.

SIR,

AS I am about thirty; and of such a round untroubled countenance as may make me appear not so much, I must complain to you of a general calamity that obstructs or suspends the advancement of the younger men in the pursuit of their fortune. I now make love to the daughter of a man of business, who is so fantastical as to threaten to marry the young lady to a contemporary of his own, I mean one of his own years. He says no young man can be good for any thing but filling an house full of children, without being wise enough to know how to provide for them. Now, as I am to succeed in love, as I can argue my father-in-law into an opinion of my ability for business, give me leave to think it not foreign to your design, to print my thoughts concerning the prejudices which men in one stage of life have to those in another. The utmost inconveniences are owing to the difficulty we meet with in being admitted into the society of men in years, and adding thereby the early knowledge of men and business to that of books, for the reciprocal improvement of each other. One of fifty as naturally imagines the same insufficiency in one of thirty, as he of thirty does one of fifteen; and each age is thus left to instruct itself by the natural course of it's own reflection and

experience. I am apt to think, that before thirty, a man's natural and acquired parts are at that strength, as, with a little experience, to enable him (if ever he can be enabled) to acquit himself well in any business or conversation he shall be admitted into. As to the objection, that those that have not been used to business are consequently unfit for it, it might have been made one time or other against all men that ever were born; and is so general a one, that it is none at all. Besides, he that knew men the best that ever any one did, says, that 'Wisdom cometh by opportunity of leisure, and he that hath little business shall become wise.' And my Lord Bacon observes, that those governments have been always the most happy, which have been administered by such as have spent part of their life in books and leisure; and instances in the governments of Pius Quintus and Sixtus Quintus about his own time, who, though they were esteemed but pedantical friars, proceeded upon truer principles of state than those who had had their education in affairs of state and courts of princes. If this rule holds in the dispatch of the most perplexed matters, as of public politics, it must of necessity in that of the common divisions of business, which every body knows are directed by form, and require rather diligence and honesty than great ability in the execution.

A good judgment will not only supply, but go beyond experience; for the latter is only a knowledge that directs us in the dispatch of matters future, from the consideration of matters past of the same nature; but the former is a perpetual and equal direction in every thing that can happen, and does not follow, but makes the precedent that guides the other.

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This everlasting prejudice of the old against the young, heightens the natural disposition of youth to pleasure, when they find themselves adjudged incapable of business. Those among them, therefore, whose circumstances and way of thinking will allow them such freedom, plunge themselves in all sensual gratifications. Others of them, of a more regulated turn of thought, seek the entertainment of books and contemplation, and are buried in these pleasures. These pursuits, during our middle age, strengthen the love of retirement in the sober man, and make it necessary to the libertine. They gain philosophy enough by this time to be convinced 'tis their interest to have as little ambition as may be; and considering rather how much less they need to live happily, than how much more, can't conceive why they should trouble themselves about the raising a fortune, which in the pursuit must lessen their present enjoyment, and in the purchase cannot enlarge it.

I confess the impious and impertinent way of life and conversation of youth in general, exposes them to the just disesteem of their elders; but where the contrary is found among any of them, it should be the more particular recommendation to their patronage. There are some observations, I have by chance met with, so much in favour of young men, that I cannot suppress them. As sincerity is the chief recommendation both in public and private matters, it is observed, that the young are more sincere in the dispatch of business, and professions of friendship, than those that are more advanced in years; for they either prefer public reputation to private advantage, or believe it the only way to it. They are generally well-natured, as having not been acquainted with much malice, or soured with disappointment; the less disposed to pride or avarice, as they have neither wanted nor abounded. They are unpractised in the ways of flattery and dissimulation, and think others practise it as little as themselves. This arises from their boldness, as having not been yet humbled by the chances of life; and their credulity, as having not yet been often deceived.

I shall conclude by saying, it is very

hard upon us young fellows, that we are not to be trusted in business and conversation with those in years, till due age, together with its consequences, ill health and ill humour have marked us with a faded cheek, a hollow eye, a busy ruminating forehead; and, in short, rendered us less capable of serving and pleasing them, than we were when we were thought unable to do either. I beg your pardon for so many serious reflections, and your leave to add to them a love-letter to the father, inclosed in one to the daughter, and addressed to her for his perusal. I am, Sir, your most humble servant.

MADAM,

MY life is wrapped up in you. I dislike every conversation wherein there is not some mention made of you: whenever you are named, I hear you commended, and that gives ease to the torment I am in, while I am forced to smother the warmth of my affection towards you. You know your father is not displeased that I love you; but I am, I know not how, to prefer your interests to yourself. But all the business of the world is impertinence, and all its riches vexation, in comparison of the joy there is in being understood, Madam, your most faithful, most devoted, humble servant.

P. S. When your father asks whether I have writ, hide this, and shew him the inclosed. Look displeased, and he will plead for me.

MADAM,

I Have a great respect for you, but must beg you would not take it amiss, if I can reckon no woman a beauty whose father's favour does not add to her other qualifications. He is, as I am, a man of business; and I doubt not but he will acquaint you, that business is to be minded. Your declaration, joined with his in my favour, will make me more frequent at your house; but till I know what I have to trust to, I do not think it is proper for me to intrude upon your time, and lose my own. I am, Madam, your most humble servant.

N^o XXIII. SATURDAY, APRIL 17.

QUOD LATET ARCANUM NON ENARRABILE FIBRA.

PERI.

MR. MYSTIC.

WHEN you first erected your Lodge, you then took upon you to be a patron of Lovers, and at the same time promised your assistance to all those who should address themselves to you for advice, the better to conduct them through all those paths of love which, it is to be presumed, you have often trod before them.

It is this consideration which emboldens me to give you the trouble of this, without offering at any formal apology for it. It is a mighty pleasure and a solid satisfaction to a man, to reflect that he has it in his power to be serviceable to others; and since I am confident of your ability, if you deny me the benefit of it, I shall grudge you the possession of such an advantage, and value you no more, though a master in the art of love, than I would a miser for his wealth, when he poorly reserves it to himself, and can't find in his soul to bestow the least part of it on the most needy and indigent.

That you may be the better able to prescribe, I shall beg leave to lay my real condition before you without art or dissimulation. I am, in plain terms, what you call a rover, or a general lover. I am of the most perverse, untoward, amorous constitution imaginable; I have scarcely ever seen that female who had not some charm or other to catch my heart with; and I dare say I have been a slave to more mistresses than swell the account of Cowley's ballad called *The Chronicle*. I have frequently been lost in transports at the sight of a Chloë or a Sacharissa, and have admired many an ugly Corinna for wit or humour. Myra has charmed me ten thousand times with her singing; and my heart has leaped for joy when Miss Airy has been dancing a jig, or Isabella has moved a minuet. It has burnt and crackled like charcoal at the sight of a fan; and I have sometimes fallen a sacrifice to an hooped petticoat. In short, there is scarce a woman I ever had my eyes on, that I have not liked

and loved, admired and wished for: the pretty, the wise, the witty, the gay, the proud, and the coquet; all, all from the fine lady down to the dextrous Molly who waits with the kettle at my sister's tea-table, have made scars or wounds in my heart. And yet, after all this—which is somewhat strange—my heart is as whole as ever. What I mean is this; that notwithstanding the multiplicity of darts which have been shot at me, yet they never made any lasting impression on me, or have been able to throw me into an humour serious enough to think of marriage. Though I confess the temper I am now complaining of has been exceeding troublesome to me, yet I could not help thinking matrimony a cure worse than the disease. Besides, how shall I be certain I shan't be the same latitudinarian in love after I have swallowed the bitter dose? It is for this reason that I have long used my endeavours to find out some other remedy for my distemper; and to that end I have had recourse to all those famous physicians who have pretended to write for the good of those persons who have been in my whimsical circumstances. But, alas! after a long and tedious consultation among these mighty professors, I could not perceive myself one jot the better. I am convinced they are all a parcel of pretenders; and that I had no more reason to expect any benefit from them, than one afflicted with the gout has to hope for an infallible cure from your boasting sham doctors, who disperse their bills and advertisements through every street in London.

The first I addressed myself to was that Galen in love, Ovid. The fellow had a smooth tongue, and really talked very prettily. He shewed me a great many soft letters of his own composing: told me some odd surprising stories; made me sigh at his mournful elegies; and promised me, that if I would carefully observe his rules, and follow those directions laid down in his *Philo-dispensatory*, or *Arte Amandi*, I need not doubt but my business was done. He delivered

this with so serious an air, that silly I began to believe him, and gather hopes of a perfect recovery; till one day, when I was giving great attention to him, I heard him break off in the midst of his harangue, and immediately crying out, in the exclamatory stile—

*Hei mihi! quid nullis amor est medicabilis
verbis.*

From that very moment I thought him an ignorant coxcomb, and never meddled with him since.

The next I ventured upon was good Abraham Cowley. He was looked upon as a proficient in his way; and was very much in vogue among the ladies, for gently handling their hearts, and easily getting at their passions. His greatest business lay among such as had but newly received their wounds, and some expected great refreshment from his balmy compositions; but it has been said by others, that he was the worst in the world at a green wound; and that whoever took him in hand when they were first hurt, they rather grew worse than better. However, I was resolved to undergo one course with him: I was introduced into his company by a young cousin of mine, who was at that time either in love, or the green sickness; and in a little time I was intimately acquainted with his *mistress*. I was, I remember, mightily pleased to hear him tax the ladies, and justify his own sickness, by asking them, Could they call the shore inconstant which kindly embraced every wave? 'Ah!' thought I, 'this is a doctor after my own heart; his case is exactly mine.' But, alas! I had not kept him company long, before I discovered that, for all his skill in numbers, he was but an ignorant physician, since he could not cure himself. The third I went to was Mrs. Behn. She indeed, I thought, understood the practice part of love better than the speculative; but she was a dangerous quack, for a sight of her always made my distemper return upon me. I liked some parts of her *Lover's Watch*, and would have bought it from her; she told me she would hire the use

out to me for a little time, but that she would not sell it outright.

The last I advised with was the most renowned Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq. He was a person of great note and fashion; and had very good practice in this city for some years. He had acquired a large stock of fame and reputation for his experience in the world, his acquaintance with all the little weaknesses and infirmities incident to human kind; and was more particularly had in esteem for his knowledge and proficiency in the occult sciences. From a gentleman thus qualified, what might I not have hoped for? But, Sir, I soon understood that all his predictions and prophecies were but dreams and fables to amuse and divert us, and that he understood himself very well when he called himself *Tatler*.

And now, Sir, after all these fruitless and repeated inquiries, my last and only refuge is in you. You are certainly acquainted with all the secret springs of love, and know the hidden causes which make my heart rise up to every *She* I meet. You can't be ignorant how it comes to pass that my temper is so various; and my inclination so floating and changeable, that one object can't confine them, but, like a wandering bee, they fly at every flower. I assure you, Mr. Myrtle, my present disposition is what gives me great concern and uneasiness. Tell me how I may reclaim this volatile heart of mine, this desultory imagination, and keep it within bounds: shew me the way to fix it to one, or not love at all. I am not uneasy for your answer, for I must own to you I feel but very little pain; but in some distempers they say that is an ill sign. I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

CHARLES LAZY.

My correspondent is come already to the condition he desires; for what is not confined to one, is not love at all: and my friend Charles needs no further information in his case, but to be told, that he does not labour under the passion of love, but the vice of wantonness.

N° XXIV. TUESDAY, APRIL 20.

THERE DWELT THE SCORN OF VICE, AND PITY TOO.

WALLER.

TRUE Virtue, distinguishes itself by nothing more conspicuously than charity towards those who are so unhappy as to have, or be thought to have, taken a contrary course: it is in the very nature of Virtue to rejoice in all new converts towards it's interest, and bewail the loss of the most inconsiderable votaries. It would, perhaps, be thought a severity to make conclusions of the innate goodness of ladies at a visit, by this rule: beauty, wit, and virtue, in those conversations, generally receive all the diminution imaginable; and little faults, imperfections, and misfortunes, are aggravated not without bitterness.

Diſtynna, though she is commended for singular prudence and œconomy, appears in conversation never to have known what it is to be careful.

Decia, who has no virtue, or any thing like it but the forbearance of vice, cannot endure the applause of Diſtynna. Ladies who are impatient of what is said to the advantage of others, do not consider that they lay themselves open to all people of discernment, who know that it is the want of good qualities in themselves which makes people impatient of the acknowledgment of them in others.

Among the many advantages which one sex has over the other, there is none so conspicuous as that the fame of men grows rather more just and certain by examination; that of women is almost irreparably lost by so much as a disadvantageous rumour. This case is so tender, that, in order to the redress of it, it is more safe to try to dissuade the aspersers from their iniquity, than exhort the innocent to such a fortitude as to neglect their calumny.

It should, methinks, be a rule to suspect every one, who insinuates any thing against the reputation of another of the vice with which they charge their neighbour; for it is very unlikely it should flow from the love of virtue: the resentment of the virtuous towards those who are fallen, is that of pity; and that is best exerted in silence on the occasion. What then can be said to the numerous tales that pass to and fro in this town, to

the disparagement of those who have never offended their accusers? As for my part, I always wait with patience, and never doubt of hearing, in a little time, for a truth, the same guilt of any woman which I find the reports of another. It is, as I said, unnatural it should be otherwise: the calumny usually flows from an impatience of living under severity; and they report the fallies of others against the time of their own escape. How many women would be speechless, if their acquaintance were without faults! There is a great beauty in town very far gone in this vice. I have taken the liberty to write her the following epistle by the penny-post.

MADAM,

I Have frequently had the honour of being in your company, and should have had a great deal of delight in it, had you not pleased to embitter that happiness by the unmerciful treatment you give all the rest of your sex. Several of those I have heard you use unkindly were my particular friends and acquaintance. I can assure you, all the advantage you had above those you lessened on these occasions was, that you were not absent, for the company longed for the same opportunity of speaking as freely of you. Believe me, your own dress fits never the better on you for tearing other people's cloaths. While you are rising every one that falls in your way, you cannot imagine how much that fury discomposes your own figure. You believe you carried all before you the last time I had the happiness to be where you were. As soon as your cousin (whom you are too inadvertent to observe does not want sense) had mentioned an agreeable young lady which she met at a visit in Soho Square, you immediately contradicted her, and told her you had seen the lady, and were so unhappy that you could not observe those charms in her. 'Her name,' says your cousin, 'is Mrs. Dulcett.'—'The same,' said you. Your cousin replied—'She is tall and graceful.' You again, with a scornful smile—

smile—'She is long and confident.'—
 'But,' says your kinswoman; 'I cannot but think her eye has a fine languor.'—'I don't know but she might,' said you, 'if one could see her awake; but that sleepiness and insensibility in them, added to her ungainliness, makes me doubt whether I ever saw her but as walking in her sleep.'—'Well, but her understanding has something in it very lively and diverting.'—'Aye,' says you, 'they that will talk all, or have memories, cannot but utter something, now and then, that is passable.' Your cousin seemed at a loss what to say in support of one she had pronounced so agreeable; and therefore she retired to the lady's circumstances, since you had disallowed every thing in her person, and said, her fortune would make up for all, for she had now ten thousand pounds, and would, if her brother died, have almost two thousand a year. This, too, you knew the contrary of; and gave us to understand the utmost of her fortune was four thousand, and the brother's estate had a very heavy mortgage, and, when cleared, would not be a neat thousand a year. Your cousin, when you took so much pains to contradict her misrepresentations, grew grave with you; and told you, since you were so positive, you were the only one in town who did not think Mrs. Dulcett, besides her being a considerable fortune, a woman of wit, that danced gracefully, sang charmingly, had the best mien, the prettiest way in every thing she did; that she had the least affectation, the most merit; was—
 Upon which you, with the utmost impatience, after ruffling your fan, and riggling in your seat, as if you had heard your mother abused, rose up, and, declaring you did not expect to be allowed one word more in the conversation, since your cousin had once got the discourse, left the room. Your cousin held the lady of the house from following you out; and, instead of the anger we thought her in when you were in the room, fell into the most violent laughter. When she came to herself, she prevented what we were going to say on the occasion, by telling us there was no such creature in nature as Mrs. Dulcett; that she had

laid this plot against you for some days, and was resolved to expose you for that scandalous humour of yours, of allowing nobody to have any tolerable good qualities but yourself. 'You see,' said she, 'how suddenly she made objections, from the sort of character I gave the woman, assigning the proper imputation to the quality in her according to my commendation.' I think we said all together—'What, no such woman in the world!'—'What,' said the lady of the house, 'she to be so particular in the estate mortgaged, and all those dislikes to one she never saw, to one not in being, to one you had invented!' You may easily imagine what railery passed on the occasion, and how you were used after such a demonstration of your censoriousness.

I desire, whenever hereafter you have the evil spirit upon you to lessen any body you hear commended, to think of Mrs. Dulcett: if you do not, you may assure yourself you will be told of her. Among your acquaintance, whenever any one is spoken ill of, Mrs. Dulcett is the word; and no one minds what you say, after you have been thus detected. I advise you to go out of town this season; go into a milk diet; and, when you return with country innocence in your blood, I will do justice to your good-humour; and am, Madam, your most obedient, humble servant,

MARMADUKE MYRTLE.

The painful manner women usually receive favourable accounts of one another, shews that the ill-nature in which this young woman was detected, is not an uncommon infirmity. But let every woman know, she cannot add to herself what she takes from another; but all that she bestows upon another, will, by the discerning world, be restored tenfold: and there can be no better rule or description of a right disposition than this—

There dwelt the Scorn of Vice; and Pity too.

The scorn of it, in virtuous persons, is in respect to themselves; the pity, in regard to others.

N^o XXV. THURSDAY, APRIL 22.

—QUID NON MORTALIA PECTORA COGIT.

VIRG.

TO MR. MYRTLE.

SIR,

I Suppose that you begin to repent you published my last letter to you, since your late indulgence to me occasions this frequent trouble. I don't know, Sir, what it may be to you, but I am sure it is real pleasure to me to embrace all opportunities of shewing myself your humble servant; therefore give me leave to talk before so great a master of Love, and to use the trite simile of making a declaration of war before Hannibal.

AMONG all those passions to which the frailty and weakness of man subject him, there is not any that extends such a boundless and despotic empire over the whole species as that of Love. The meek, the mild, and the humble, are strangers to envy, anger, and ambition; but neither the malicious, the choleric, or the proud, can say their hearts have been always free from the power of Love. This has subdued the exalted minds of the most aspiring tyrants, and has melted the most sanguine complexion into an effeminate softness. An undaunted hero has been known to tremble when he approached the fair, and the mighty Hercules let fall his club at a woman's feet. The scholar, the statesman, and the soldier, have all been lovers; and the most ignorant swain has neglected both his flocks and pipe to woo Daphne or Sylvia.

But though Love be a passion which is thus common to all, yet how widely do its votaries differ in their manner of address! The pleasing enjoyment of the admired object is what they all pursue; and yet few agree in the same methods of obtaining their ends, or accomplishing their desires. Every lover has his particular whim, and each resolves to follow his own way. Some fancy money has a sovereign charm in it, and that no rhetoric is so irresistibly prevailing as a golden shower. Others think to take their mistresses, as they do towns, by bombarding or undermining them; if they cannot beat them down by force of arms, they will try to blow them up with false music. Some attempt to

frighten their mistresses into a compliance, and threaten to hang or drown themselves if they refuse to pity them. Others turn tragedians, and expect to move compassion by a falling tear, or a rising sigh. Some depend upon dress; and conclude, that if they can catch the eye, they'll soon seize the heart. One man affects gravity, and another levity, because some women prefer the solemnity of a Spaniard to the gaiety of a Frenchman. An handsome leg has found the way to a widow's bed; and a coquette has been won by a song or a caper. A prude may be caught by a precise look and a demure behaviour; and a Platonic lady has lain with her humble servant out of a refined friendship, when she would not listen to a declaration of love. Some will be attacked in mood and figure; and others will have it, that a great scholar will never make a kind husband. The witty Clara is delighted with impertinence, and a celebrated toast has languished for the beautiful outside of a painted butterfly. Some women are allured by the resemblance of their own follies; and I have seen a rake, by the help of a whining accent, triumph over a sanctified Quaker.

But of all the arts which have been practised by the men on the other sex, I have not observed any kind of address which has been so generally successful as flattery. Whether it be that, by making a woman in love with herself, you thereby engage her to love the person who makes her so; as, who would not be apt to be fond of the cause which produces so agreeable an effect? or whether the partiality and self-love which most women abound in, does the more readily induce them to believe, that all the praise which is given them is really due to their merit, and therefore they admire you for your justice; or whatever other reason may possibly be assigned for this weakness; I shall not now go about to enquire: but so it is, that the shortest and surest way to a woman's heart is through the road of skillful flattery. This, like a subtle poison, insinuates itself almost into every female; and a dose of it, rightly prepared, seldom fails.

fails to produce an extraordinary operation. Like a delicious cordial, it meets with an universal acceptance and approbation; while sincerity and plain-dealing are looked upon as nauseous and disgusting physic. In opposition to what I here advance, it may perhaps be said, we may love the treason, and yet hate the traitor. How true this maxim may be in politics, (treachery being a moral evil, which, though of use to us for our safety, is yet sufficient to beget an aversion in us towards the wretch who is guilty of it) I shan't dispute; but I am sure in love affairs it will scarcely hold: for she must be a woman of uncommon virtues and qualifications, who can so nicely distinguish between the gift and the giver, as to refuse the one, and yet receive the other. They do not think flattery a vice, and therefore can't be persuaded to dislike a lover for being a courtier; nay, though they are conscious of some of their own imperfections, yet if their admirers are not quick-sighted enough to discern them, they are willing to impute their blindness to their love; nay, though some defects are grossly visible even to the lover, yet if he will compliment his mistress with what she really wants, I dare appeal to the whole sex, whether either such incense or the offerer of it be one jot nearer the losing their favour, and whether they are not ever delighted with both the delusion and the deceiver. But if they really believe themselves as amiable as the flatterer tells them they are, then, in point of gratitude, they conclude themselves obliged to think kindly of their benefactor; that he is one none can deny, since the greatest kindnesses you can confer on a mistress are praise and commendation. These are those melting sounds, that soft music, which never sounds harshly in a woman's ear. Before I conclude this paper, I shall relate a story which I know to be fact.

Miss Witwoud was a young gentlewoman of good extraction, and an handsome fortune. She was exactly shaped, and very pretty. She dressed and danced genteelly, and sung sweetly. But, notwithstanding these advantages, (which one would imagine were sufficient to make any one woman satisfied) she had an insufferable itch after the reputation of a wit. She fancied she had as much wit as she wanted, (though indeed she wanted more than ever she'll

have) and this conceit made her fond of scribbling and shewing her follies that way, as taking great delight in applause.

My friend Meanwell is a gentleman of good sense and a sound judgment: he is a professed enemy to flattery; and is of opinion, that to commend without just grounds, is to rob the meritorious of that which only of right belongs to them. He says a compliment is a modish lye; and declares he would not be guilty of so much baseness as to cry up a beautiful fool for wit, not even in her own hearing, though he were sure to have his falsehood rewarded by the enjoyment of his mistress. Undeserved applause is to him an argument of either want of judgment, or of insincerity; and he resolves he will never go about to establish another's reputation at the expense of his own. With these honest useless qualities he has made long but fruitless courtship to young Miss Witwoud. Ned Courtly is a new but violent pretender to the same lady. Ned is a shallow well-dressed coxcomb. He was bred at court; and is of a graceful and confident behaviour, tempered with civility. The shallow thing can wait at a distance, and look at her, and with a smile approach her, and say—'Your ladyship is divinely pretty.' He is wonderful happy also in particular discoveries; and whenever he renews a visit to his mistress, she is sure of being presented with some additional charm, which would have for ever lain concealed, had not Ned most luckily found it out. Ned quickly perceived Miss Witwoud's weak side, and carefully watched all opportunities of making his advantage of it. Miss grows enamoured of Ned's company, and begins to despise Meanwell as an unpolished clown. She likes Ned as she does her glass, and for the same reason, that it always shews her her beauties; and she takes as much pleasure in hearing him, injudiciously as he does it, give her also the beauties of her mind, as she does to see the glass reflect those of her body. One evening last week Meanwell had the honour to sup with her. The cloth being taken away, she delivered him a copy of verses, which she said had been the product of her leisure hours, and desired the opinion of so good a judge. My friend had the patience to read them twice over, finds nothing extraordinary in them, so smilingly returns them with a silent bow. He was just going to speak

his

his mind impartially, when in came Ned Courtly. He perused and hummed them over in a seeming rapture; looked at the lady, and then at the paper, for almost half an hour, in full admiration; and then, with a better air than ever critic spoke, he pronounced, that the author of those verses had Congreve's wit, and Waller's softness, and that there was nothing to

completely perfect in all their works. The consequence of this was, Meanwell was discarded, because he would be rigidly honest in trifles; and Ned made his mistress his wife, because, in spite of nature, he allowed her a poetess; or perhaps very justly, because he really thinks her so. I am, Sir, your most humble servant,
VESUVIUS.

N° XXVI. SATURDAY, APRIL 24.

DURUM; SED LEVIUS FIT PATIENTIA
QUICQUID CORRIGERE EST NEFAS.

HOR.

SIR,

I Find you are an author who are more inclined to give your advice in cases which raise mirth in your readers, than in those which are of a more serious and melancholy nature. But you know very well, that in virtuous love there are many unhappy accidents which may lay a claim to your compassion, and consequently to your assistance. I myself am one of those distressed persons, who may come in for my share of your concern. About eight years ago I married a young woman of great merit, who was every way qualified for a bosom friend, that is, for advancing the innocent pleasures of life, and alleviating it's misfortunes. She had all the good sense I ever met with in any male acquaintance, with all that sweetness of temper which is peculiar to the most engaging of her sex. Life was too happy with such a companion in it; for I must tell you, with tears, that she was snatched away from me by a fever about twelve months since. I was therefore unable to bear this unspeakable loss, as having conversed with very few besides herself during the whole time of our marriage. We were the whole world to one another; and whilst we lived together, though scarce either of us were ever in company, we were never alone. Being thus cut off from the society of others, and from the person who was most dear to me, I naturally betook myself to the reading of such books as might tend to my relief under this my great calamity. After many others which I have perused upon this occasion, I lately had the good fortune to meet with a little volume of sermons just published, intitled, 'Of Contentment, Patience, and

Resignation to the Will of God, in several Sermons, by Isaac Barrow, D. D.

The duty of contentment is so admirably explained, recommended, and enforced by arguments drawn from reason and religion, that it is impossible to read what he has said on this subject without being the better for it. I shall beg leave to transcribe two or three passages which more immediately affected me, as they came home to my condition.

'The death of friends doth, it may be, oppress thee with sorrow. But canst thou lose thy best friend? Canst thou lose the presence, the conversation, the protection, the advice, the succour of God? Is he not immortal, is he not immutable, is he not inseparable from thee? Canst thou be destitute of friends whilst he stands by thee? Is it not an affront, an heinous indignity, to him, to behave thyself as if thy happiness, thy welfare, thy comfort had dependence on any other but him? Is it not a great fault to be unwilling to part with any thing, when he calleth for it? Neither is it a loss of thy friend, but a separation for a small time: he is only parted from thee, as taking a little journey, or going for a small time to repose; within a while we shall be sure to meet again, and joyfully to congratulate, if we are fit, in a better place, and more happy state. *Premissimus, non amissimus*—We have sent him thither before, not quite lost him from us.

'Thy friend, if he be a good man, (and in such friendships only we can have a true satisfaction) is himself in no bad condition, and doth not want thee: thou canst not therefore reason-

H

ably

ably grieve for him; and to grieve only for thyself, is perverse selfishness and fondness.

What follows runs on in the same vein of good sense, though it is a consolation which I myself cannot make use of.

But thou hast lost a great comfort of thy life, and advantage to thy affairs here. Is it truly so? Is it indeed an irreparable loss, even excluding the consideration of God, whose friendship repaireth all possible loss? What is it, I pray, that was pleasant, convenient, or useful to thee, in thy friend, which may not in good measure be supplied here? Was it a sense of hearty good-will, was it a sweet freedom of conversation, was it sound advice, or kind assistance in thy affairs? And mayest thou not find those which are alike able and willing to minister those benefits? May not the same means which knit him to thee, conciliate others also to be thy friends? He did not alone surely possess all the goodness, all the fidelity, all the wisdom in the world, nor hath carried them all away with him? Other friends therefore thou mayest find to supply his room: all good men will be ready, if thou art good, to be thy friends; they will heartily love thee, they will be ready to cheer thee with their sweet and wholesome society, to yield thee their best counsel and help upon any occasion. Is it not therefore a fond and unaccountable affection to a kind of personality, rather than want of a real convenience, that disturbeth thee?

In fine, the same reasons which in any other loss may comfort us, should do it also in this: neither a friend, nor any other good thing, we can enjoy under any security of not soon losing it; our welfare is not annexed to one man, no more than to any other inferior thing. This is the condition of all good things here, to be transient and separable from us, and accordingly we should be affected towards them.

Fragile fraetum est, mortale mortuum est.

Give me leave to cite also, out of this great author, a very agreeable story which is taken from Julian's Epistles, and which perhaps pleases me the more, as it is applicable to my own case.

When once a great king did excessively and obstinately grieve for the

death of his wife, whom he tenderly loving, a philosopher observing it, told him, that he was ready to comfort him, by restoring her to life, supposing only that he would supply what was needful towards the performing it. The king said he was ready to furnish him with any thing. The philosopher answered, that he was provided with all things necessary except one thing. What that was, the king demanded. He replied, that if he would upon his wife's tomb inscribe the names of three persons who never mourned, she presently would revive. The king, after enquiry, told the philosopher, that he could not find one such man. "Why, then, O abjectest of all men!" said the philosopher, smiling, "art thou not ashamed to moan as if thou hadst alone fallen into so grievous a case, when as thou canst not find one person that ever was free from such domestic affliction?" So might the naming one person, exempted from inconveniences like to those we undergo, be safely proposed to us as a certain cure of ours; but if we find the condition impossible, then is the generality of the case a sufficient ground of content to us; then may we, as the wise poet adviseth, solace our own evils by the evils of others.

I have observed, Sir, in your writings, many hints and observations upon the most common subjects, which appeared new to me; I should therefore beg of you to turn your thoughts upon that melancholy accident which is the occasion of this letter. If you can give me any additional motives of comfort, I shall receive them as a very great piece of charity; and I believe you may oblige many others who are under the same kind of affliction, as well as, Sir, your most humble servant,

R. B.

This gentleman has too favourable an opinion of me, if he thinks me capable of adding any thing material to what has been handled by the excellent author whom he has mentioned in his letter. That learned man always exhausts his subjects, and leaves nothing for those who come after him. He was not only a great divine, but was perfectly well acquainted with all the ancient writers of morality, whose thoughts he has every where digested into his writings; and, at the same time, had a most inexhaustible

ble fund of observation and good sense in himself. He has scarce a sermon that might not be spun out into a hundred modish discourses from the pulpit: for

which reason I am very glad to find, that we are likely to have a new edition of his works.

N^o XXVII. TUESDAY, APRIL 27.

INGENUAS DIDICISSE FIDELITER ARTES
EMOLLIT MORES

OID.

AMONG the many letters of correspondents, I have of late received but very few which are not mixed with satire. I am a little tired with such ideas as the reading those performances raise in the mind; so are those who imagine they are alluded to by what has passed through my hands; and I doubt not but my readers in general cease also to be delighted with that kind of reflections. When, therefore, it is irksome to us all, it is time to pass to more pleasing arguments. But as I told the town at my first setting out, that Mr. Severn was my favourite of all the characters which I have represented to compose our little club, mentioned in my first paper, I shall declare myself farther on this subject, by printing my letter I have writ to Mr. Severn, which he will receive to-morrow morning.

TO MR. SEVERN.

SIR,

THIS comes with a set of Latin authors, just now published by Tonsen. You see they are in twelves, and fit to be carried on occasion in the pocket. He sent me two sets, one for myself, the other for the gentleman whom I meant by Mr. Severn. You will please, therefore, to accept the present he makes you. You need not be enjoined to be partial to them as they are a gift; for, as you'll observe Mr. Maittaire has had the care of the edition, you need not be farther encouraged to recommend them to your friends and acquaintance. The learned world is very much obliged to that gentleman for his useful labours; and his elegant addresses to those to whom he dedicates the book, as well as to the reader in general, shew him a perfect master in what he undertakes, for he introduces his authors in a stile as pure as their own. You know he had the good fortune to

live in the favour, and, as it were, under the patronage of the famous Dr. Busby, to whose great talents and knowledge in the genius of men we owe very great ornaments of this age, and the supply of men, of letters and capacity for many generations, or rather classes of remarkable men during his long and eminent life. I must confess, and I have often reflected upon it, that I am of opinion Busby's genius for education had as great an effect upon the age he lived in, as that of any ancient philosopher, without excepting one, had upon his contemporaries; though I do not perceive that admirable man is remembered by them, at least not recorded by them, with half the veneration he deserves. I have known great numbers of his scholars; and am confident I could discover a stranger who had been such, with a very little conversation: those of great parts, who have passed through his instruction, have such a peculiar readiness of fancy and delicacy of taste, as is seldom found in men educated elsewhere, though of equal talents; and those who were of slower capacities, have an arrogance (for learning without genius always produces that) that sets them much above greater merit that grew under any other gardener. He had a power of raising what the lad had in him to the utmost height in what nature designed him; and it was not his fault, but the effect of nature, that there were no indifferent people came out of his hands; but his scholars were the finest gentlemen, or the greatest pedants, in the age. The soil which he manured always grew fertile: but it is not in the planter to make flowers of weeds; but whatever it was, under Busby's eye, it was sure to get forward towards the use for which nature designed it.

But I forgot what I sat down to write upon, which was to hand to you these pretty volumes of Terence, Sallust, Phæ-

H 2

drus,

drus, Lucretius, Velleius Paterculus, and Justin. But it will be said, How comes this matter to have at all a place in the Lover? Why, very properly; for to you, whose chief art in recommending yourself is to act and speak like a man of virtue and sense, that which contributes to make you wiser and better is serviceable to you, as you are a gentleman and a lover. Take my word for it, the oftener you take these books in your hand, you will find your mind the more prepared for doing the most ordinary things with a good grace and spirit; that is, the agreeable thoughts of these writers frequently employing your imagination, will naturally and insensibly affect your words and actions. It will, in a greater degree, do what good company does to all who frequent it, make you in your air and mien like those with whom you converse.

Mr. Maittaire has promised to go through the best remaining authors with the same diligence. The large indexes, which lead with so much ease to any beautiful passage one has a mind for, are of great use and pleasure: they are made with so much judgment and care, that they serve the purpose of an abbreviation of the book; and carry a secret instruction, in that they lay the sense of the author still closer in words of his own, or as good as his own. I am mighty well content with the province of being esteemed but a publisher, if I can be so happy as to quicken the passage of useful arts in the world; and I wish this paper's coming, where otherwise works of this kind would not be spoken of, may be of any use to a man who deserves so well of all lovers of learning as Mr. Maittaire. Perhaps a fond mother may,

by my means, lighten her son's satchel, and get him these little volumes, instead of the heavy load the body was before encumbered with; and her own eyes may judge, that this is a print which cannot hurt the child's.

But I must leave these ancients, and give a cast of my office to a living writer, a sister of the quill.

The sentiments and inclinations of my mind are so naturally turned to love, that it is with a great deal of pleasure I frequent the play-house, where I have often an opportunity of seeing this passion represented in all its different shapes. I have for some years been so constant a customer to the theatre, that I have got most of our celebrated plays by heart; for which reason, it is with more than ordinary pleasure that I hear the actors give out a new one. It is no small satisfaction to me, that I know we are to be entertained to-night with a comedy from the same hand that wrote *The Gamester* and *The Busy Body*. The deserved success these plays met with, is a certain demonstration that wit alone is more than sufficient to supply all the rules of art. The incidents in both those pieces are so dextrously managed, and the plots so ingeniously perplexed, as shew them at once to be the invention of a wit and a woman. The curious will observe the same happy conduct in the entertainment of this night; and as we have but one British lady who employs her genius for the drama, it would be a shameful reflection on the polite of both sexes, should she want any encouragement the town can give her. I desire your interest in her behalf, and am, Sir, your most obedient servant,

MARMADUKE MYRTLE.

N^o XXVIII. THURSDAY, APRIL 29.

— NIHIL INVITÆ TRISTIS CUSTODIA PRODEST:
QUAM PECCARE PUDET, CYNTHIA, TUTA SAT EST.

PROPERT.

MY correspondents shall do my business for me to day.

MR. MYRTLE,

I Throw this letter from two pair of stairs, with half a crown with it, in an old glove, in hopes that he takes it

up (for I am watching till a porter, or some such body, passes by) will carry it to your Lodge. I have none to complain to but yourself. I am locked up for fear of making my escape to a gentleman, whose addresses I received by my father's approbation, though now his

his pretensions are disallowed for the sake of a richer man. I have no help in this miserable condition, nor means to relieve myself, but by desiring you to print the inclosed in your very next Lover. The gentleman who is to marry me, has visited me twice or thrice alone; and indeed I see such infallible marks of the most unfeigned and respectful passion towards me, that it is with great anguish I write to him in the sincerity of my heart, which I know will be a sincere affliction to him. It is no matter for a direction by his name; he reads your paper, and will too soon gather, that the circumstances of my letter can concern only himself.

SIR,

IT is a very ill return which I make to the respect you have for me, when I acknowledge to you, that though the day for our marriage is appointed, I am incapable of loving you. You may have observed, in the long conversations we have had at those times that we were lately left together, that some secret hung upon my mind: I was obliged to an ambiguous behaviour, and durst not reveal myself further, because my mother, from a closet near the place where we sat, could both hear and see our conversation. I have strict commands from both my parents to receive you; and am undone for ever, except you will be so kind and generous as to refuse me. Consider, Sir, the misery of bestowing yourself upon one who can have no prospect of happiness but from your death. This is a confession made, perhaps, with an offensive sincerity; but that conduct is much to be preferred to a covert dislike, which could not but pall all the sweets of life, by imposing on you a companion that doats and languishes for another. I will not go so far as to say, my passion for the gentleman whose wife I am by promise, would lead me to any thing criminal against your honour; I know it is dreadful enough to a man of your sense to expect nothing but forced civilities in return for tender endearments, and cold esteem for undeserved love: If you will, on this occasion, let reason take place of passion, I doubt not but Fate has in store for you some worthier object of your affection, in recompence of your goodness to the only woman that could be in-

sensible of your merit. I am, Sir, your most humble servant,

M. H.

MR. MYRTLE,

I Am a young woman perfectly at my own liberty, two and twenty, in the height and affluence of good health, good fortune, and good humour; but, I know not how, I must acknowledge there is something solitary and distressed in the very natural condition of our sex, till we have wholly rejected all thoughts of marriage, or made our choice. The man has not yet appeared to these eyes, whom I could like for a husband. I therefore apply myself to you, to let the town know there is, not many furlongs from your Lodge, one that lives with too much ease, and is undone for want of that acceptable kind of uneasiness, the importunity of lovers. If you can send me half a dozen, I promise to take him who addresses me with most gallantry and wit, and to yield to one of them within six months after their first declaration that they are my servants; but, at the same time, I expect them to fight one another for me, and promise to be particularly civil to him who first has his arm in a scarf for my sake. I expect that they turn their fury and skill towards disarming, or slightly wounding, not killing, one another; for I shall not take it for respect to me to lessen the number of my slaves: at the same time, the conquered is to beg, and the victor is to give life, for my sake only. You must know, Sir, I value more being envied by women, than loved by men; and there is nothing proclaims a beauty so effectually, as an interview of her lovers behind Montague House. In hopes of a serenade, soon after the publication of this letter, I rest, in dull tranquillity, your most affectionate humble servant,

CLIDAMIRA.

MR. MYRTLE,

YOU must know I am one of those coxcombs who know myself to be abused, but have not resolution enough to resent it as I ought. To tell you plainly, I am a kind keeper, and know myself to be the most servile of cuckolds, for I am wronged by a woman whom I may part with when I please; but am afraid that when I please will never happen. As other people write verses and sonnets
to

to deplore the cruelty of their mistress, I could think of nothing better this morning than diverting myself, and soothing my folly by the example of men of wit who have formerly been in my condition. I was glad to meet an epigram of a gentleman I suppose your worship is acquainted with, that hit my condition; and make you a present of it, as I have improved and translated it in the janty stile of 'a man of wit and pleasure about the town.' Pray, allow me to call her my dear for the rhyme sake; for I never wrote verses till she vexed me.

DE INFAMIA SUÆ PUELLÆ.

Rumor ait crebro nostram peccare puellam;

*'Nunc ego me sordidis auribus esse velim,
'Crimina non hæc sunt nostra sine facta dolore
'Quid miserum torques, rumor acerbe ? tace.'*

'The town reports the falsehood of my dear,
'To which I cry, 'Oh that I could not hear!
'I love her still; peace, then, thou babler
'Fame,
'And let me rest contented in my shame.'

Pray give my humble service to Mrs. Page: Your honourable lovers have a good conscience to support you in your vexations; but we, alas—— I am your humble servant,

GILES LIMBERHAM,

Nº XXIX. SATURDAY, MAY 1.

QUIS DESIDERIO SIT FUDOR AUT MODUS
TAM CHARI CAPITIS?

HOR.

THE reader may remember, that in my first paper I described the circumstances of the persons whose lives and conversations my future discourses should principally describe. Mr. Oswald, who is a widower, and in the first year of that distressed condition, having absented himself from our meetings, I went to visit him this evening. My intimacy made the servant readily conduct me to him, though he had forbidden them to let any body come at him. I found him leaning at a table, with a book before him; and saw, methought, a concern in him much deeper than the seriousness which arises from reading only, though the matter upon which a man has been employed has been never soweighty. He saw in me, I believe, a friendly curiosity to know what put him into that temper; and began to tell me, that he had been looking over a little collection of books of his wife's; and said, it was an inexpressible pleasure to him, that, though he thought her a most excellent woman, he found, by perusing little papers and minutes among her books, new reasons for loving her. 'This,' continued he, 'now in my hand, is the Con- templations Moral and Divine of Sir Matthew Hale; she has turned down, and written little remarks on the margin, as she goes on. In order to give

'you a notion of her merit and good sense, pray give me leave to read three or four paragraphs which she has marked with this pencil.' He here looked upon the pencil, till the memory of some little incident, of which it reminded him, filled his eyes with tears; when, to hide new reasons for loving her, (but he only discovered his grief the more) he began, in a broken voice, to read Sir Matthew's second chapter in his discourse of Religion.

'The truth and spirit of religion comes in a narrow compass, though the effect and operation thereof are large and diffusive. Solomon comprehended it in a few words, *Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.* The soul and life of religion is the fear of God, which is the principle of obedience; but obedience to his commands, which is an act or exercise of that life, is various, according to the variety of the commands of God. If I take a kernel of an acorn, the principle of life lies in it: the thing itself is but small; but the vegetable principle that lies in it takes up a less room than the kernel itself, little more than the quantity of a small pin's head, as is easy to be observed by experiment; but the exercise of that spark of life is large and comprehensive in it's operation;

'tion; it produceth a great tree, and in
'that tree the sap, the body, the bark,
'the limbs, the leaves, the fruit: and
'so it is with the principles of true re-
'ligion; the principle itself lies in a nar-
'row compass, but the activity and e-
'nergy of it is diffusive and various.

'This principle hath not only pro-
'ductions that naturally flow from it;
'but where it is, it ferments and assimi-
'lates, and gives a kind of tincture even
'to other actions that do not in their
'own nature follow from it, as the
'nature and civil actions of our lives.
'Under the former was our Lord's pa-
'rable of a Grain of Mustard-seed;
'under the latter of his comparison of
'Heaven, just as we see in other things
'of nature. Take a little red wine, and
'drop it into a vessel of water, it gives
'a new tincture to the water; or, take
'a grain of salt, and put it into fresh
'liquor, it doth communicate itself to
'the next adjacent part of the liquor,
'and that again to the next, till the
'whole be fermented: so that small and
'little vital principle of the fear of God
'doth gradually, and yet suddenly, as-
'similate the actions of our life flowing
'from another principle. It rectifies
'and moderates our affections, and
'passions, and appetites; it gives truth
'to our speech, sobriety to our senses,
'humility to our parts, and the like.

'Religion is best in it's *simplicity* and
'*purity*; but difficult to be retained so,
'without superstitious and accessions;
'and those do commonly, in time, *stifle*
'and *choak* the *simplicity* of Religion,
'unless much care and circumspection
'be used. The temperations are so
'*many*, and so *cumberfome*, that Reli-
'gion loseth it's *nature*, or is strangled
'by them: just as a man that hath some
'excellent simple cordial spirit, and puts
'musk in it to make it smell sweet, and
'honey to make it taste pleasant; and,
'it may be, *cantharides*, to make it look
'glorious. Indeed, by the infusions, he
'hath given it a very *fine smell*, and
'*taste*, and *colour*; but yet he hath so
'*clogged* it, and *sophisticated* it with su-
'peradditions, that, it may be, he hath

'altered the nature, and destroyed the
'virtue of it.'

Here my friend could go on no far-
ther; but, reaching to me the book it-
self, he leaned on the table, covering his
eyes with his hands, while I read the
following words on the margin: 'Grant
'that this superaddition which I make,
'may be Love and Constancy to Mr.
'Oswald.' No one could be unaffected
with this incident; nor could I forbear
falling into a kind of consolatory dis-
course, drawn from the satisfaction it
must needs be to find new proofs of the
virtue of a person he so tenderly loved:
but observing his concern too quick and
lively for conversation on that subject,
I broke off with repeating only two
distichs of Mr. Cowley to my Lady
Vandyke, on the death of her husband.

Your joys and griefs were wont the same to be;
Begin not now, blest pair! to disagree.

I cannot but think it was a very right
sentiment in this lady, to make that duty
of life in which she took pleasure, the
superstructure upon the motive of Reli-
gion; for nothing can mend the heart
better than an honourable love, except
Religion. It sweetens disasters, and mo-
derates good fortune, from a benevolent
spirit that is naturally in it, and extends
itself to things the most remote. It can-
not be conceived by those who are in-
volved in libertine pleasures, the sweet
satisfactions that must arise from the
union of two persons who have left all
the world in order to place their chief
delight in each other; and to promote
that delight by all the methods which
reason, urged by religion and duty, for-
warded by passion, can intimate to the
heart. Such a pair give charms to vir-
tue, and make pleasant the ways of in-
nocence. A deviation from the rules of
such a commerce would be courting
pain; for such a life is as much to be
preferred to any thing that can be com-
municated by criminal satisfactions, (to
speak of it in the mildest terms) as so-
briety and elegant conversation are to
intemperance and rioting.

N° XXX. TUESDAY, MAY 4

DESPICERE UNDE QUAS ALIOS, PASIMQUE VIDERI
ERRARE, ATQUE VIAM PALANTEIS QUÆRERE VITÆ.

Lyc.

IT is a very great satisfaction to one who has put himself upon the Platonic foot, to look calmly on, while carniverous lovers run about howling for hunger, which the intellectual and more abstracted admirer is never gnawed with. The following letters give a lively representation of this matter.

MR. MYRTLE,

IF ever any man had reason to dispatch himself for love, I am the person: I am lost to all intents and purposes, though I was the happiest man in the world, and have no one to accuse but myself of my present misfortunes; and yet I am not to be accused neither. To open this riddle, you must know, Mr. Myrtle, that I am not now twenty years of age: I think that circumstance necessary to tell you, for they say the misfortune which befall me cannot happen but from the height of youth and blood. I live in the neighbourhood of a young lady of wealth, wit, and beauty. I love her to death; and she loves me with no less ardour. We have had frequent meetings by stealth, which are now interrupted by a very uncommon accident. I have a father, who can never be enough satisfied that his house is not to be burned before next morning; and for this reason, as well as, perhaps, other jealousies, insists upon the liberty of coming into my chamber when I am asleep, to see whether my candle is out. One night he stole softly in, as indeed he always does, for fear of disturbing me, when I, fast asleep, was talking of my mistress. As he has since told me, I named her; and then thought fit to go on as follows.

'The happiness we now enjoy is doubled by the secrecy of it. I will come again to-morrow night; and have ordered the hackney-coachman to be ready to let me get up to your window at the hour appointed. Be ready to throw up the sash when I tinkle with a piece of money at the

glass. Your letters I keep always in a box under my bed, and my father can never come at them. Pray be sure to write; for the day-time 'tis mighty sad should be troubled with the impertinence and bustle of the world, and we never to meet or hear from each other but at midnight.'

The old gentleman took my key out of my pocket, and by that means made himself master of my papers; and in an high point of honour, the next day told the parents of my mistress the danger their daughter was in of being carried off by his son, who had no pretensions to a woman of her fortune, though he can do very handsomely for me.

This matter has been very indiscreetly managed by both our parents; the servants, and consequently the neighbourhood, have the story amongst them, and the innocentest woman in the world is at the mercy of busy tongues. Now, Sir, I am not to judge of the actions of my father; but, as he has a longer purse than he will own, I desire you would lay before him, that he did not come at my secret fairly; and that he ought, since he goes upon punctilios, to have made no use of what he arrived at by the infirmity of a troubled imagination. He says indeed for himself, that he had this thought in his head; and therefore, had I owned the thing to him when he taxed me, without shewing my mistress's letters, he should have been obliged, by the manner of getting the secret, to have kept it; but since I had not owned it, had I not been confronted by her letters, which he got by taking my key out of my pocket, I am under the same degree of favour as a man who committed any other crime would have been who had betrayed himself in the same manner. Mr. Myrtle, you are a great casuist; and you see what a jumble of unhappy circumstances I am involved in, which I desire you to extricate me from by your best advice, which will come very seasonably to two families who are much your friends, among whom none so much

as the lady concerned in the story; and where she approves, you have an admirer in, Sir, your most humble servant,

ULYSSES TRANSMARINUS.

I have notice given me, that I must cross the seas for this business; but I am resolved to stay, at least in the same nation with my fair one, till I hear farther.

FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 1714.

MR. MYRTLE,

YOU'LL oblige extremely your most humble servant in inserting this in your next Lover.

MADAM,

DEATH would have been welcomer than your letter in Thursday's Lover; for I must survive the misery that would have ended. Your sincerity is so far from being *offensive*, that my passion (were it now lawful to indulge it) is greater for you; and I cannot better prove the truth of mine than by *refusing you*, and making you as happy in *your choice*, as with you would have been the most unfortunate

TO MR. MYRTLE.

SIR,

THERE is a young woman in our neighbourhood that makes it her business to disturb every body that passes by with her beauty. She runs to the window when she has a mind to do mischief; and then, when a body looks up at her, she runs back, though she came there on purpose. Her hands and arms, you must know, are very fine; for that reason she never lets them be unemployed, but is feeding a squirrel, and catching people that pass by all day long. She has a way of heaving out of the window to see something, so that one who stands in the street just over-against her is taken with her side face; one that is coming down fixes his eyes at the pole of her neck till he stumbles; and one

coming up the street is fixed stock-still by her eyes. She won't let any body go by in peace. I am confident, if you went that way yourself, she would pretend to get you from Mrs. Page. As for my own part, I fear her not; but there are several of our neighbours whose sons are taken in her chains, and several good women's husbands are always talking of her; and there is no quiet. I beg of you, Sir, to take some course with her; for she takes a delight in doing all this mischief. It would be right to lay down some rules against her; or, if you please, to appoint a time to come and speak to her: it would be a great charity to our street, especially to, Sir, your most humble servant,

ANTHONY EYELID.

SIR,

HERE is a young gentlewoman in our street, that I do not know at all, who looked full in my face, and then looked as if she was mistaken, but looked so pretty, that I can't forget her: she does something or other to every one that passes by. I thought I would tell you of her. Yours,

CH. BUSY.

SIR,

HERE is a young woman in our street that looks often melancholy out of the window, as if she saw nobody, and nobody saw her, she is so intent. But she can give an account of every thing that passes, and does it to way-lay young men. Pray say something about her. Yours, unknown,

TALL-BOY GAPESEED.

SIR,

THERE is a young woman in our neighbourhood that makes people, with bundles on their backs, stand as if they had none; and those who have none stand as if they had too heavy ones. Pray take her to your end of the town, for she interrupts business. Yours,

RALPH DOODLE.

place; so that I beg leave hereby to recant, and protest against those damnable doctrines. And further, I humbly beseech all ladies with whom I converse, to bestow on me the encouragement which new and true converts generally meet with. I was riding in the country last spring: of all the days in the week, it was upon a Tuesday; when, on a sudden, I heard a voice which guided my sight to two young women unknown to me; they were negligently, I won't say meanly, dressed, had large stiffs in their hands, and were followed by spaniels and greyhounds. One, whom I now see with the lover's telescope, wore a bonnet; on her I cast my eyes till the brightness of her's made them fall me; that is, I have seen nothing in it's true light since; I am a piece of a scholar, yet am not able, Mr. Myrtle, to affirm what I saw, and how this object struck the organs of my body, affected my soul and mind, and produced this lasting idea. The old philosophers, you know, attributed a soul to the loadstone, when they could not find out the reason of it's union to iron. Whence shall I deduce the cause of my condition? Shall I speak of an impulse, pressure of insensible particles, secret power, destiny, the stars, magic?

NO. XXXII. SATURDAY, MAY 8.

THE task which I have enjoined myself in these papers, is to describe Love in all it's shapes: to warn the unwary of those rocks, upon which so many in all ages have split formerly, do split still, and will split hereafter, as long as men and women shall be what they now are; and to delineate the true and unfeigned delight which virtuous minds feel in the enjoyment of their lawful and warranted passions. This task, the farther I go, I find grows the more upon my hands. The dreadful effects which have attended irregular pursuits in this way, have led some shallow philosophers to assert that as simply unlawful, or at least as unbecoming a wife man, which is certainly one of the first and fundamental laws of nature; and they have seemed to look upon that as a curse which, rightly managed, is the greatest blessing which our

or shall I say, in the lawyers terms, that every feature had it's copies? or must I mention occult quality, or, as the genteel would translate it, *je ne sçai quoi*? I should have told you, I was a hunting when I saw this object; that, when it fled, my good-spirited gelding refused the gate that parted us, and run away with me. This was as good as a second game; for I, who before was the greatest sportsman in the country, have ever since haunted the woods to fight, not to halloo. In lonely shades by day, and moonshine walks by night, (thine ever by my side) I have found my only pleasures. This condition I have suffered for along series of time; but wandering in the same wood, I saw a country girl in the same bonnet in which I formerly beheld my great calamity. I followed her, and found the abode of her, for whom I languish. *Ma Chérie* is your constant reader, who hereby will have some notion of me, and my name. I crave, Sir, your assistance herein; and (to ease yourself of another troublesome letter) your advice, in case of I denied to wait upon her: I have abundance more to say; but desire you to say it to yourself in behalf of, Sir, your enigmoured humble servant.

ALBION.

Creator has given us here below; and which is, in truth—

That cordial drop Heaven in our cup has

To make the nauseous draught of life go

Yet, on the other hand, when (compensatively speaking) to very many misery in this particular, more than in any other single circumstance belonging to human life, one is tempted to cry out, with my Lord Brookes, in his *Alaham*—

O wearisome condition of mortality,
Born to one law, and to another bound!
Vainly begotten, yet forbidden vanity;
Created sick, commanded to be sound!
If Nature, sure, did not delight in blood,
She would have found more easy ways to good.

But since complaints under most pressures avail but little; since in every species

cies of actions there is a right and a wrong, which circumstances only can determine; since our Maker (for greater reasons than those which our laws ascribe to our princes) cannot possibly do any wrong, or, as the divines speak, cannot be the author of sin; since what was essential to human nature before the Fall, is in itself most certainly good, when rightly pursued; and since one may observe that mistakes and false steps in this matter meet with harsher censures, and are often more severely punished in this world, than many other crimes which seem to be of a higher nature; I have thought it worth while to enquire into this matter as exactly as I could, and to present the public with my thoughts concerning the real differences between the several sorts of evil actions, as I shall find opportunity, and as my importunate correspondents, who are often in haste, and who must not be disoblinded, will give me leave.

One method, as I take it, to induce men to avoid any evil, is to know not only wherein it consists, but how great it is. The Stoics of old pretended that all sins were equal; that it was as great a crime to steal a pin, as to rob upon the road. When their wife man was once out of his way, he lost his pretensions to wisdom; and when those were gone, whatsoever he did or said afterwards, in that state of aberration, it was all one: sins were sins; and where the essence was the same, the degrees mattered little. This contradicts human nature, and common sense; and the laws of all nations distinguish, in the punishments which they inflict, between crimes, as they are more or less pernicious to the society in and against which they are committed. That God does so too, we need not question. The Judge of the whole earth must certainly do right. When we know wherein the true greatness of every sin consists, we shall be able to judge of our own faults, and sometimes of the faults of others; we shall see why we ought to avoid them where there is room for compassion; and where punishment is necessary, we may be sure then to be severe in the right place; and, by knowing how and when to forgive, may sometimes raise those that are sinking, and often save those from utter destruction, who, if abandoned, would be irrecoverably lost. This is a large, and,

I think, an useful theme; and it is what I have not seen sufficiently enlarged upon in those books of morality which have come in my way. Now, if in my inquiries I have an eye all along to the Christian institution, and take a view of the sins and irregularities of mankind in such a light as is consistent with the practice of our Saviour and his apostles, I hope the softer and politer part of my readers will not be, upon that account, disgusted.

The aggravation of all crimes is to be estimated either from the persons injured or offended, or from the intrinsic malice from whence those injuries and offences proceed. All offences are against either our Maker, our neighbour, or ourselves. Offences against our Maker have this particular aggravation, that they are committed against the Person to whom we have the greatest obligations, and consequently do more immediately contradict the light of our own conscience. The obligations of our original being, and of our constant preservation during the whole course of our lives, which takes in all the blessings that we daily receive from him, are so peculiarly due to God, that they are not communicable to any earthly being. For though we may, and do hourly, receive advantages from our fellow-creatures, yet those advantages are ultimately to be referred to God, by whose good providence those fellow-creatures are enabled to do us good. And besides, the good they do us is as much for their sakes as for ours; since the advantages they receive from us, and those we receive from them, are reciprocal. But though our Creator is always doing good to us, we can do none to him; and, upon that score, he has a title to our obedience, and that implicit, when once we are satisfied it is he that commands. This makes *Idolatry* to be so crying a sin, because it is a communication of that honour to the creature, (whether inanimate or animate it matters not) to which it can have no possible title, and is due to the Creator only. Upon this account also *Irreligion* and *Atheism* are still worse, because they tear up all religion by the roots; and all service and worship is denied to Him, to whom the utmost service and worship is justly due. This is so plain, that it needs neither enlargement nor proof.

The second degree of offences, is of those

those which are committed against our neighbours. They are equally God's creatures as ourselves, and have an equal title to his protection, and we ought to think that they are equally dear to him. Offences against them may be comprehended under one common title of *Injustice*: and what divines usually call *Sins against the Second Table*, are, if strictly examined, but so many sorts of injuries against our neighbours. The pains, the care, the trouble, and, above all, the love, of parents, demand honour from their children; and therefore, when they do not meet with it, they are injured. This shews the justice of the fifth Commandment. To take away our neighbour's life, is the greatest injury which can be done him, because it is absolutely irreparable. Next to that, are injuries done to his bed, and for the same reason too. The goods we enjoy are the means of our subsistence here; and he that against our wills takes them from us, does, more or less, according to the greatness of our loss, deprive us of our subsistence. This shews the justness of the sixth, seventh, and eighth Commandments. And since none of those things to which, by the original grant from our common Maker, we have a just title, are secure, if calumny and false accusations are once allowed; therefore false witnessing is also forbidden in the ninth Commandment. And since a desire of possessing what is not our own, and what we see others enjoy, will, if encouraged, naturally lead men to as many sorts of injustice as there are sorts of desires; therefore coveting what is not our own, is

fenced against by the tenth Commandment.

By this detail it plainly appears why I set offences against our neighbours in the second place. When God gave the Ten Commandments, he mentioned no offences but those against himself and our neighbours; and left the sins which are immediately against ourselves (which are properly sins of intemperance) to be forbidden by other laws.

But then, though sins against ourselves ought, with respect to their guilt, (which is what I here propose to consider) to be reckoned last; yet it does not follow from thence that they are not sins, and consequently do not deserve punishment. Whatsoever disables us in any measure from doing our duty to God or our neighbour, is so far an *injustice* towards them, and robs them of their due, and is so far a crime. I say, an *injustice*, because, as I said before, all faults, in my opinion, are ultimately to be referred to that. Even *uncharitableness* is *injustice*: because our common Creator, who has made us all liable to want, and consequently under a necessity of desiring assistance, expects we should be helpful to one another, because he is good to us. And when Aristotle says, in those words that are the motto of this paper, that *all virtues are contained in justice*, he states the true notion of good and evil; and it is as applicable to virtues considered in a Christian light, as in a natural one. This, then, is the first rule by which we are to weigh the different degrees of good and evil.

N° XXXIII. TUESDAY, MAY II.

—ANIMUM PICTURA PASCIT—

VIRG.

I Went the other day down the River, and dined with some virtuous friends at Greenwich. The purpose of the gentleman who invited us was, to entertain us with a sight of that famous Ceiling in the Great Hall in Greenwich Hospital, painted by our ingenious countryman Mr. Thornhill, who has executed a great and noble design with a masterly hand, and uncommon genius. The regularity, symmetry, boldness, and prominence of the figures, are not to be described; nor is it in the power of words to raise too

great an idea of the work. As well as I could comprehend it from seeing it but twice, I shall give a plain account of it.

IN the middle of the ceiling (which is above 106 feet long, and 56 feet wide, and near 30 feet high) is a very large oval frame, painted and carved in imitation of gold, with a great thickness rising in the inside, to throw up the figures to the greater height: the oval is fastened to a great suseat, adorned with roses, in imitation

imitation of copper. The whole is supported by eight gigantic figures of slaves, four on each side, as though they were carved in stone. Between the figures, thrown in heaps in a covering, are all manner of maritime trophies in mézorelievo; as anchors, cables, rudders, masts, sails, blocks, capitals, sea-guns, sea-carriages, boats, pinnaces, oars, stretchers, colours, ensigns, pennants, drums, trumpets, bombs, mortars, small arms, granadoes, powder barrels, fire arrows, grappling irons, cross flaves, quadrants, compasses, &c. All in stone colours, to give the greater beauty to the rest of the cieling, which is more significant.

About the Oval in the inside are placed the twelve signs of the Zodiac; the six northern signs, as Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, are placed on the north side of the oval; and the six southern signs, as Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces are to the south, with three of them in a groupe which compose one quarter of the year. The signs have their attitudes; and their draperies are varied and adapted to the seasons they possess; as the cool, the blue, and the tender green, to the Spring; the yellow to the Summer; the red and flame-colour to the Dog Days and Autumnal Season; and the white and cold to the Winter: likewise the fruits and the flowers of every season, as they succeed each other.

In the middle of the Oval are represented King William and Queen Mary, sitting on a Throne, under a great pavilion or purple canopy, attended by the four cardinal virtues, as Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, and Justice.

Over the Queen's head is Concord, with the Fasces; at her feet two doves, denoting mutual concord and innocent agreement, with Cupid holding the king's sceptre, while he is presenting Peace with the Lamb and Olive-branch, and Liberty, expressed by the Athenian Cap, to Europe; who laying her crowns

at his feet, receives them with an air of respect and gratitude. The king tramples Tyranny under his feet; which is expressed by a French personage, with his leaden crown falling off; his chains, yoke, and iron sword, broken to pieces; cardinal's cap, triple-crowned mitres, &c. tumbling down. Just beneath, is Time, bringing Truth to light; near which is a figure of Architecture, holding a large drawing of part of the Hospital, with the Cupola; and pointing up to the royal founders, attended by the little Genii of her art. Beneath her is Wisdom and Heroic Virtue, represented by Pallas and Hercules destroyed in Ambition, Envy, Covetousness, Detraction, Calumny, with other vices, which seem to fall to the earth, the place of their more natural abode.

Over the royal pavilion is shewn, at a great height, Apollo in his golden chariot, drawn by four white horses, attended by the Horse, and morning dews falling before him, going his course through the twelve signs of the Zodiac, and from him the whole Plafond, or cieling, is enlightened.

Each end of the Cieling is raised in perspective, with a balustrade and elliptic arches, supported by groupes of stone figures, which form a gallery of the whole breadth of the hall; in the middle of which gallery, (as though on the stock) going into the upper hall, is seen in perspective, the Tassieril of the Blenheim man of war, with all her galleries, port-holes open, &c. to one side of which is a figure of Victory flying, with spoils taken from the enemy, and putting them aboard the English man of war. Before the ship is a figure representing the City of London, with the arms, sword, and cap of maintenance, supported by Thame and Isis with other small rivers offering up their treasures to her. The River Tyne pouring forth sacks of coals. In the gallery on each side the ship, are the arts and sciences that relate to navigation, with the great Archimede

* Aries is of a turbulent aspect, with little winds and rains hovering about him; his drapery of a bluish green, shadowed with dark russet, to denote the changeableness of the weather. April, or Taurus, is more mild; May, or Gemini, in blue; June a calm red; July more reddish; and, as he leans upon his lion, veils a little from the sun. Virgo, almost naked, and flying from the heat of the sun; Libra in deep red; Scorpio veils himself from the scorching sun in a flame-colour mantle; Sagittarius in red, less hot. December, or Capricorn, bluish; Aquarius in a watery green; Pisces in blue. Over Aries, Taurus, Gemini, presides Flora. Over Cancer, Leo, Virgo, presides Ceres. Over Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Bacchus. And over Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces, Hyems hovering over a brazen pot of fire.

des,

des, many old philosophers, consulting the compass, &c.

At the other end, as you return out of the hall, is a gallery in the same manner, in the middle of which is the stern of a beautiful galley filled with Spanish trophies; under which is the Humber, with his pigs of lead; the Severn, with the Avon falling into her; with other lesser rivers: In the north end of the gallery is the famous Tycho Brahe, that noble Danish knight, and great ornament of his profession and human nature; near him is Copernicus, with his Pythagorean system in his hand; next to him is an old mathematician, holding a large table, and on it are described two principal figures of the incomparable Sir Isaac Newton, on which many extraordinary things in that art are built. On the other end of the gallery, to the south, is but learned Mr. Flamsteed, Reg. Astronom. Profr. with his ingenious disciple, Mr. Thomas Weston. In Mr. Flamsteed's hand is a large scroll of paper, on which is drawn the great eclipse of the sun that will happen on April 1715. Near him is an old man with a pendulum, counting the seconds of time; as Mr. Flamsteed makes his observations with his great mural arch and tube on the deftest of the moon on the Severn; which at certain times forms such a roll of the tides as the sailors corruptly call the Higer, instead of the Ea-

ger, and is very dangerous to all ships in it's way. This is also expressed by rivers tumbling down by the moon's influence into the Severn. In this gallery are more arts and sciences relating to navigation.

All the great rivers, at each end of the hall, have their proper product of fish issuing out of their vases.

In the four great angles of the Ceiling, which are over the arches of the galleries, are the four Elements, as Fire, Air, Earth, and Water, represented by Jupiter, Juno, Cybele, and Neptune, with their lesser deities accompanying, as Vulcan, Iris, the Fauni, Amphitrite, with all their proper attitudes, &c.

At one end of the great Oval, is a large figure of Fame descending, riding on the winds, and sounding forth the praises of the Royal Pair.

All the sides of the Hall are adorned with fluted pilasters, trophies of shells, corals, pearls; and the jambs of the windows ornamented with roses impannelled, or the *grues reticulatum* heightened with green velvet.

The whole raises in the spectator the most lively images of Glory and Victory, and cannot be beheld without much passion and emotion.

N. B. Sir James Bateman was the first proposer and the first benefactor to this Ceiling.

N. XXXIV. THURSDAY, MAY 13.

WAKING LIFE APPEARS A DREAM.

ROSAMOND.

REPROACH is of all things the most painful to Lovers, especially to us of the Platonic kind. This makes it especially grievous to me, that a paper, though a very dull one, called the Monitor, accuses me of writing obscenely. He is a stupid fellow, and does not understand, that the same object, according to the artist who represents it, may be decent, or unfit to be looked at. Naked figures, by a masterly hand, are so drawn, sometimes, as to be incapable of exciting immodest thoughts. I have, in my paper of May the 6th, spoken of an amour that owes it's beginning, and makes it self necessary to be lawfully consummated, from an accident of a lady's falling, topsey-turvy; upon which this

heavy rogue says—'Is this suffered in a Cristian country?'—Yes it is, and may very lawfully, but not when such awkward tools as he pretend to meddle with the same subject. None but persons extremely well-bred ought to touch ladies petticoats; but I aver, that I have said nothing to offend the most chaste and delicate, and all who read that passage may be very innocent; and the lady of the story may be a very good Christian, though she did not in her appearance differ from an Heathen, when she fell upon her head. We who follow Plato, or are engaged in the high passion, can see a lady's ankle with as much indifference as her wrist; we are so inwardly taken up, that the same ideas do not

spring

spring in our imaginations, as do with the common world; we are made gentle, soft, courteous, and harmless, from the force of the *belle* passion; of which coarse dunces, with an appetite for women, like that they have for beef, have no conception.

As I gave an account the other day of my passing a day at Greenwich, with much delight, in beholding a piece of painting of Mr. Thornhill's which is an honour to our nation; I shall now give an account of my passing, yesterday morning, an hour before dinner, in a place where people may go and be very well entertained, whether they have, or have not, a good taste. They will certainly be well pleased, for they will have unavoidable opportunities of seeing what they most like, in the most various and agreeable shapes and positions; I mean, their own dear selves. The place I am going to mention is Mr. Gumley's Glass Gallery, over the New Exchange. I little thought I should ever, in the Lover, have occasion to talk of such a thing as Trade; but when a man walks in that illustrious room, and reflects what incredible improvement our artificers of England have made in the manufacture of glass in thirty years time, and can suppose such an alteration of our affairs in other parts of commerce, it is demonstrable that the nations who are possessed of mines of gold are but drudges to a people whose arts and industry, with other advantages natural to us, may make itself the shop of the world. We are arrived at such perfection in this way of which I am speaking, that it is not in the power of any potentate in Europe to have so beautiful a mirror as he may purchase here for a trifle, by all the cost and charge that he can lay out in his dominions. It is a modest computation, that England gains fifty thousand pounds a year by exporting this commodity for the service of foreign nations; the whole owing to the inquisitive and mechanic, as well as liberal genius of the late Duke of Buckingham. This prodigious effect by the art of man, from parts of nature that are as unlikely to produce it as one would suppose a man could burn common earth to a tulip, opens a field of contemplation which would lead me too far from my purpose, which is only to celebrate the agreeable economy of placing the several wares to

sale, in the Gallery of which I am talking. No imagination can work up a more pleasing assemblage of beautiful things, to set off each other, than are here actually laid together. In the midst of the walk are set in order a long row of rich tables, on many of which lie cabinets inlaid, or wholly made of corals, conchs, ambers, or the like parts of matter, which Nature seems to have formed wholly to shew the beauty of her works, and to have thrown and distinguished from the mass of earth, as she does by great gifts and endowments those spirits and persons of men and women whom she designs to make instruments of great consideration in the crowd of her people. When I walked here, I could not but lament to my companion, that this method was not taken up when the Indian kings were lately in England. The surprize such appearances as these would put them into, would have been as great as a new sense added to one of us. To see the things about us so placed, as that three or four persons can to the eye, in an instant, become a large assembly! You cannot move, or do any the least indifferent action, in a limb or part of your body, but you vary the scene around with additional pleasure. Among other circumstances, I could not but be pleased to see a lap-dog at a loss, for an instant, for his lady, and beginning to run to the image of her in a glass, till he was driven back by himself, whom he saw running towards him. The poor animal corrected his mistake, by tracing her footsteps by his sense, less subject to mistake, and arrived at her feet, to the no small diversion of the company who saw it, and the envy of several fine gentlemen, whom the odd accident diverted from looking at themselves, to behold the beauteous Bellamira.

It would be an arrogance to pretend to convey distinctly by the ear a pleasure that should come in at the eye; but my gentle reader will thank me for many pleasing thoughts he or she had not ever had before, in a place more new than he could arrive at by landing in a foreign nation. About forty years ago, it was the fashion for all the gallants of the town, the wits and the braves, to walk in the New Exchange below, to shew themselves. What an happiness

happiness have those whose fortunes and humours are capable of receiving gratifications in this place, that such a scene was displayed in their life-time! The learned have not more reason to rejoice that they live in the same days with

Newton, than the gay, the delicate, and the curious in luxury of dress and furniture, have, that there has appeared in their time my honest friend, and polite director of artificers, Mr. Gumley.

N° XXXV. SATURDAY, MAY 15.

— 'TIS CONTEST,
THE MEN WHO FLATTER HIGHEST, PLEASE US BEST.
HELEN TO PARIS—OVID'S EPISTLES.

I Shall make the following letters the entertainment of this day; and recommend the contents of the first in a more particular manner to the serious consideration of all my female readers.

DEAR MARMADUKE,

THOUGH you have treated the fair sex with an air of distinction suitable to the character you bear, I presume you will make no scruple to admonish them of any faults, by the amendment of which they may still become more amiable. What I complain to you of, is from my own experience. My case is this.

Miranda is in the bloom of sixteen, and shines in all the beauties of her sex. Her face, her shape, her mien, her wit, surprise and engage all who have the happiness to know her. Miranda is the idol of my heart, the object of all my hopes and fears. None of her actions are indifferent to me; every look and motion gives me either pleasure or pain. I have omitted no reasonable methods to convince her of the greatness of my passion; yet, as she is one with whom I propose to pass the remainder of my life, I cannot forbear mixing the sincerity of the friend with the tenderness of the lover. In short, Sir, I am one of those unfortunate men who think young women ought to be treated like rational creatures. I forbear, therefore, to launch out into all the usual excesses of flattery and romance; to make her a goddess, and myself a madman; to give up all my senses and reason to be moulded and informed as she thinks proper.

From hence arise all our differences. Miranda is one of those fashionable ladies, who, expecting an implicit faith from their admirers, are impatient and affronted at the least shew of contradiction.

As she was lately reading the works of a celebrated author, who has thought

fit to represent himself in his writings under the character of an old man, she was pleased to observe, that it was very uncommon to see a person at fourscore have so lively a fancy, and so brisk an imagination. I could not help informing her, upon this occasion, that I had frequently had the honour to drink a glass with the gentleman; and that, to my certain knowledge, he was not yet turned of forty. Instead of thanking me for setting her right in this particular, she immediately took fire, and asked me with a frown, Whether that was my breeding to contradict a lady? You must know, Sir, this question usually puts an end to all our disputes. A little while after she desired my opinion of her lap-dog; and I had no sooner unfortunately observed that his ears were somewhat of the shortest, than she roundly asked me, Whether I designed that for a compliment? I took the freedom from hence, in an honest plain way, to expose the weakness and folly of being delighted with flattery, to tell her that ladies ought not always to be complimented, to enumerate the inconveniences it often leads them into, to make her sensible of the ill designs men generally aim at by it, and the mean opinion they must entertain of those who are delighted with it. All this would not do; I could not get one kind look from her that night.

I have told you already, that I have used all reasonable methods to convince her of my passion; and I am sure I have the preference in her esteem to all other pretenders. She knows I love; and, in spite of all her arts to hide it, I know I am beloved: yet, from these little differences, and a certain coquet humour which makes her delight to see her lover uneasy, though at the same time she torments herself, I have often despaired of our ever coming together. I thought

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however,

however, the following verses, which I presented to her yesterday, made some impression on her; and if she sees you think them tolerable enough to allow them a place in your paper, I am in hopes they may help to hasten the happy day.

I.

TELL me, Miranda, why should I
Lament and languish, pine and die;
While you, regardless of my pain,
Stem pleas'd to hear your slave complain?

II.

Dame Eve, unskill'd in female arts,
And modern ways of tort'ring hearts,
No sooner saw her spark than lov'd,
Confess'd her flame, and his approv'd.

III.

Nature still breaks through all disguise,
Glow in your cheeks, and rules your eyes:
Love trembles in your hands and heart;
Your panting breath proclaim his dart.

IV.

No more, Miranda, then, be coy,
No longer keep us both from joy;
No longer study to conceal
What all your actions thus reveal.

I am, dear Marmaduke, your most
obedient humble servant.

MR. MYRTLE,

I Send you the inclosed letter, which I
have lately received from a young
Templar, who is my humble servant. I

desire you would inform me whether
what he asserts be law or equity. His
letter runs thus.

MADAM,

HAPPENING lately to be in company with a venerable lady who has a very large fortune, I was so complaisant as to ask her if she would allow me to do her the honour to make her a wife. She was so kind as to ask me again, whether I was in jest or earnest. Upon my repeating the question, she returned my civility, and told me she thought I was mad. But upon my third application she consented; that is, she told me positively she would never have me. This I take for an absolute promise, having been frequently informed, that women's answers in such cases are to be interpreted backwards.

I have consulted a proctor in Doctors Commons, who seems to be of opinion that it has the full force of a contract; and that, having witness of it, I might recover half her fortune, should she offer to marry any one else.

I mention this, Madam, not only to let you see that I can have the same encouragement elsewhere which you give me, but to admonish you how much care you ought to take of promising any other man marriage, by declaring positively that you will never have him, except your most obedient, humble servant,

TOM TRUELOVE.

N° XXXVI. TUESDAY, MAY 18.

CONCUBITU PROHIBERE VAGO—HOR.

I Have heard it objected, by several persons, against my papers, that they are apt to kindle love in young hearts, and enslave the sexes with a desire for one another: I am so far from denying this charge, that I shall make no scruple to own it is the chief end of my writing. Love is a passion of the mind, (perhaps the noblest) which was planted in it by the same hand that created it. We ought to be so far, therefore, from endeavouring to root it out, that we should rather make it our business to keep it up and cherish it. Our chief care must be to fix this, as well as our other passions, upon proper objects, and to direct it to a right end.

For this reason, as I have ever shewn myself a friend to honourable love, I have constantly discountenanced all vicious passions. Though the several sorts of these are each of them highly criminal, yet that which leads us to defile another man's bed is by far the blackest dye.

The excellent author of *The Whole Duty of Man* has given us a very lively picture of this crime, with all those melancholy circumstances that must necessarily attend it. One must, indeed, wonder to see it punished so lightly among civilized nations, when even the most barbarous have regarded it with the utmost horror and detestation. I was lately entertained with a story to this purpose,

purpose, which was told me by one of my friends, who was himself upon the place when the thing happened.

IN an out-plantation, upon the borders of Potuxen, a river in Maryland, there lived a planter, who was master of a great number of negro slaves. The increase of these poor creatures is always an advantage to the planters, their children being born slaves; for which reason the owners are very well pleased when any of them marry. Among these negroes there happened to be two who had always lived together, and contracted an intimate friendship, which went on for several years in an uninterrupted course. Their joys and their griefs were mutual; their confidence in each other was intire; distrust and suspicion were passions they had no notion of. The one was a bachelor; the other married to a slave of his own complexion, by whom he had several children. It happened that the head of this small family rose early one morning, on a leisure day, to go far into the woods a hunting, in order to entertain his wife and children at night with some provisions better than ordinary. The bachelor slave, it seems, had for a long time entertained a passion for his friend's wife; which, from the sequel of the story, we may conclude he had endeavoured to stifle, but in vain. The impatience of his desires prompted him to take this opportunity of the husband's absence to practise upon the weakness of the woman; which accordingly he did, and was so unfortunate as to succeed in his attempt. The hunter, who found his prey much nearer home than usual, returned, some hours sooner than was expected, loaden with the spoils of the day, and full of the pleasing thoughts of feasting and rejoicing, with his family, over the fruits of his labour. Upon his entering his shed, the first objects that struck his eyes were his wife and his friend asleep in the embraces of each other. A man acquainted with the passions of human nature will easily conceive the astonishment, the rage, and the despair, that overpowered the poor Indian at once; he burst out into lamentations and reproaches, and tore his hair like one distracted. His cries and broken accents awakened the guilty couple, whose shame and confusion were equal to the agonies of the injured.

After a considerable pause of silence on both sides, he expostulated with his friend in terms like these: 'My wrongs are greater than I am able to express, and far too great for me to bear. My wife — but I blame not her. After a long and lasting friendship, exercised under all the hardships and severities of a most irksome captivity; after mutual repeated instances of affection and fidelity, could I suspect my friend, my bosom friend, should prove a traitor? I thought myself happy even in bondage, in the enjoyment of such a friend and such a wife; but cannot bear the thoughts of life with liberty, after having been so basely betrayed by both. You both are lost to me, and I to you. I soon shall be at rest. Live; and enjoy your crime. Adieu!' Having said this, he turned away, and went out, with a resolution to die immediately. The guilty negro followed him, touched with the quickest sense of remorse for his treachery. 'Tis I alone,' said he, 'that am guilty; and I alone who am not fit to live! Let me intreat you to forgive your wife, who was overcome by my importunities. I promise never to give either of you the least disquiet for the future: live and be happy together, and think of me no more. Bear with me but for this night, and to-morrow you shall be satisfied.' Here they both wept, and parted. When the husband went out in the morning to his work, the first thing he saw was his friend hanging upon the bough of a tree before the cabin-door.

If the wretches of this nation, who set up for men of wit and gallantry, were capable of feeling the generous remorse of this poor slave upon the like occasions, we should, I fear, have a much thinner appearance of equipage in town.

Methinks there should be a general confederacy amongst all honest men to exclude from society, and to brand with the blackest note of infamy, those miscreants, who make it the business of their lives to get into families, and to estrange the affections of the wife from the husband. There is something so very base and so inhuman in this modish wickedness, that one cannot help wishing the honest liberty of the Ancient Comedy were restored; and that offenders in this kind might be exposed by their names

in our public theatres. Under such a discipline, we should see those who now glory in the ruin of deluded women, re-

duced to withdraw themselves from the just resentments of their countrymen and fellow-citizens,

N° XXXVII. THURSDAY, MAY 20.

WHAT PAINS, WHAT RACKING THOUGHTS HE PROVES,
WHO LIVES REMOV'D FROM HER HE LOVES!

CONGRUE.

MY own unhappy passion for Mrs. Page has made me extremely sensible of all the distresses occasioned by love. I have often reflected what could be the cause that, while we see the most worthless part of mankind every day succeeding in their attempts; while we see those wretches, whose hearts are utterly incapable of this noble passion, appear stupid and senseless amidst the caresses of the fair; we cannot but observe, that the noblest and greatest flames which have been kindled in the breasts of men of sense and merit, have seldom met with a due return.

As the thoughts of those who have been thoroughly in love are frequently wild and extravagant, I have been sometimes tempted to think that Providence, never designing we should fix our thoughts of happiness altogether here, will not allow us to taste so large a share of it as we must necessarily do in the enjoyment of an object on which all the passions of our soul have been placed, and to which all the faculties of our mind have been long aspiring.

It is certain, however, that, without having recourse to a superior power, there are several accidents which naturally happen on these occasions, and from whence we may generally give a pretty good account why the greatest passions are usually unsuccessful. It has been long since observed by a celebrated French writer, that it is much easier for a man to succeed who only feigns a passion, than for one who is truly and desperately in love. The first is still master of himself, and can watch all the turns and revolutions in the temper of her whom he would engage. The latter is too much taken up with his own passion to attend to any thing else; it is with difficulty, he can even persuade himself to speak, when he finds every thing he can say so short of what he feels, and that his conceptions are too tender to be

expressed by words. The fair, generally speaking, are not sufficiently sensible of the value they ought to put upon such a passion, nor consider how strong that love must be which shall throw the most eloquent into the utmost confusion before them. Flavia is an unhappy instance of what I am observing. She was courted at once by Tom Trifle and Octavio. The first could entertain her with his love with the same indifference he talked on any other occasion, and with great serenity of mind make a digression from what he was saying, either to play with her lap-dog, or give his opinion of a suit of knots. Octavio, when fortune favoured him with an opportunity of declaring himself, was often struck speechless in the midst of a sentence, and could for some time express himself no other way than by pressing her hand and dropping a tear. Flavia having duly weighed the merit of both, married Trifle. His unkindness to her after marriage, his inability for any thing of business, and carelessness in relation to his fortune, soon plunged her into so many unhappy circumstances, that she had long since sunk under the weight of them, had she not been constantly supported by the interest and assistance of the generous Octavio.

But besides the reasons I have already assigned for the ill success of the most deserving passions, there is one which I must not omit. It is the unhappiness of too many women of fortune and merit (from a distrust of their own judgment) to submit themselves entirely to the direction of others, and rely too much on those friendships they have contracted with some of their own sex. These female acquaintance either immediately form some design of their own upon them, in order to accomplish which every other proposal is discouraged; or from a spice of envy, too incident to the sex, cannot endure to see them ardently beloved,

loved, or think of having them pass their days in the arms of a man who they are sensible would make it the business of his life to oblige them.

I have been led more particularly into the subject of my present paper by the unhappy passion of poor Philander. Philander, though of an age which the greatest part of our youth think fit to waste in all the excesses of luxury and debauchery, has laid it out in furnishing his mind with the most noble and manly notions of wisdom and virtue. He has not, at the same time, forgot to make himself master of all those little accomplishments which the polite have agreed to think necessary for a well-bred man; and is equally qualified for the most important affairs, or the most gay conversation. A perfect knowledge of the world has made him for a long time look with the utmost contempt on that insipid part of the female sex who are skilled in nothing but dress and vanity. His heart remained untouched amidst a thousand beauties, till a particular accident first brought him to the knowledge of the lovely, the virtuous Emilia. Emilia, with a fortune that might command the vanities of life, has shewn that she has a mind infinitely above them. Her

beauty serves but as the varnish to her virtues; while, with a graceful innocence peculiar to her, she declares that, if ever she becomes a wife, she has no ambition to be a gaudy slave, but shall prefer substantial happiness to empty show. Philander saw and loved her with a passion equal to so much desert: his birth and fortune must have entitled him at least to a favourable hearing, had not his love given the alarm to the designs of a friend. There is something at all times highly barbarous in aspersing the absent, even where the case is doubtful; but the malicious creature, who takes it upon her to be Emilia's directress, is foolish enough to charge Philander with being deficient in those very things for which he is more remarkably conspicuous. As I am a constant patron to virtuous love, I am in hopes, however, that should this paper reach Emilia, she will be so just to herself, to be her own judge in a cause of this consequence; since, as a celebrated author observes, it is very certain that a generous and constant passion, in an agreeable lover, is the greatest blessing that can happen to the most deserving of her sex; and, if overlooked in one, may perhaps never after be found in another.

Nº XXXVIII. SATURDAY, MAY 22.

—SCRIBERE JUSSIT AMOR.

OVID.

I Shall make this paper consist of one or two letters. The first is from Philander to Emilia; but was probably intercepted by the good-natured directress whom I mentioned in my last. There is so much love and sincerity through the whole, as must have affected the most stubborn temper.

PHILANDER, TO EMILIA.

MADAM,

IF you judge of my passion only by what I said, when I had lost the honour to see you, you very much injure a heart like mine, that is filled with sentiments too lively, too tender, to be expressed. I hardly know indeed what I said. What I very well remember is, that I was all love and all confusion; that I found it more difficult to speak before the woman I was born to admire,

than I have formerly done before the largest assemblies.

At the same time, I must confess, I was not a little amazed at being so often interrupted by a creature whom the most common rules of civility ought to have kept at a much greater distance. I must own, Madam, I was perfectly at a loss how to behave myself on such an occasion; and whether I ought to stifle my resentments, or give way to them, while I was so near a person whom I had rather die than offend.

As to the business of fortune between us, I have no other proposal to make, but that I may put my whole estate into the hands of your council, to be settled after any manner which you think will make you most easy. I hope I have long since resolved that my carriage shall be such, if ever I have the honour to be called your husband, as shall unite our interests

interests by the surest tie; I mean that of *affection*. Give me leave to assure you, Madam, with a freedom which I think myself obliged to use on so serious an occasion, that, even as beautiful as you are, I could never be contented with your person without your *heart*. All I desire is, that I may have leave to try if my utmost endeavours to please and deserve you can make any impression on it. I only beg I may be allowed to explain myself at large on this head; though at the same time, to confess the truth, Madam, I cannot help entertaining a vain hope that Providence had a much more than ordinary influence in my first seeing you, and that I shall act with so much truth and sincerity in my pretensions to you, as may possibly move you to think, that though I can never fully deserve you, I am much too sincere to be slighted. Vouchsafe, Madam, to hear me; and either root out this foolish notion by a frank and generous denial, or bless me with an opportunity of dedicating my whole life to your service, and doing whatever the heart of man can be inspired with, when it is filled at once with *gratitude* and *love*. I am, Madam, with infinite passion, your most devoted, most obedient, humble servant, &c.

The next letter was sent me last week by a lady whose case is truly deplorable, if it is really such as she here represents it. I shall insert it, as she desires, for the sake of the moral at the end of it.

SIR,

I Am, perhaps, the most unfortunate woman living. My story, in short, is this. Cinthio—pardon those tears that will fall upon this paper at the sight of his name—I would tell you that I was long and passionately beloved by him—But how can I describe the greatest, the sincerity of his passion! What pains did he not take, what methods did he omit, to shew how much he valued me? I must have been the worst, the most foolish of my sex, to have been insensible to so much truth and merit. I loved the dear, the unhappy youth, with a passion not inferior to his own; but out of a foolish reserve, which our silly sex seldom know when they ought to keep up, and when lay aside, I rather chose to receive his

messages, and send him his answers, by a female confidant, than to see him myself. Doria (for so I shall call the wretch) had long been a common friend to us both: she had a thousand times talked to me of Cinthio with all those praises he so truly deserved; when one day she came to me, and, with a seeming anguish of mind, told me that Cinthio was the worst of men, and had basely betrayed me. It would be too tedious to give you an account of the fact she charged him with. I shall only inform you, that there happened at that time to be so many unlucky circumstances which made what she had told me look like truth, that I could not help believing her. She found the way to work up my passion to such a height, that I made a vow never to see him, or receive a message from him more; and within a fortnight after, by her instigation, took a man for my husband whom I could neither love nor hate. I was no sooner married, than I was fully convinced my Cinthio had been abused. After I had for some days endured the sharpest pangs of rage, despair, jealousy, and love, I composed myself just enough to send him word that I was satisfied of his innocence; but conjured him, if he had ever loved, to avoid seeing me. I was this afternoon obliged to go to a near relation's. The first person I fixed my eyes on, when I came into the room, was Cinthio, who immediately burst into a flood of tears, made me a low bow, and retired.

I had much ado to forbear fainting, but am got home, and am this moment enduring such torments as no words can give a notion of. I am undone; but, before my senses are quite lost, I send you this, that it may for the future be observed as a constant rule, by my unhappy sex, Never to condemn a lover, however guilty he may at first appear, till they have at least given him an opportunity of justifying himself. I am, Sir, the most unhappy of women,

J. C.

P. S. I had like to have omitted informing you, that when I sent a letter, in the anguish of my soul, to the wretch above described, to desire I might know why she had ruined me, I received the following answer.

DEAR

DEAR JENNY,

THE fellow you mention talked so perpetually about you, and took so little notice of any body else, that I could at last no longer endure him. I plainly foresaw that, if you had ever come to-

gether, you would have been company for none but yourselves; for which reason I took care to have you marry a man with whom, if I am not mistaken, you may live as other women generally do with husbands. I am, yours, &c.

N^o. XXXIX. TUESDAY, MAY 25.

NEC VERBUM VERBO CURABIS REDDERE FIDUS
INTERPRES

HOR.

SINCE I have given public notice of my abode, I have had many visits from unfortunate fellow-sufferers, who have been crossed in love as well as myself.

Will Wormwood, who is related to me by my mother's side, is one of those who often repair to me for my advice. Will is a fellow of good sense, but puts it to little other use than to torment himself. He is a man of so refined an understanding that he can set a construction upon every thing to his own disadvantage, and turn even a civility into an affront. He groans under imaginary injuries, finds himself abused by his friends, and fancies the whole world in a kind of combination against him. In short, poor Wormwood is devoured with the spleen. You may be sure a man of this humour makes a very whimsical lover. Be that as it will, he is now over head and ears in that passion; and, by a very curious interpretation of his mistress's behaviour, has, in less than three months, reduced himself to a perfect skeleton. As her fortune is inferior to his, she gives him all the encouragement another man could wish; but has the mortification to find that her lover still fours upon her hands. Will is dissatisfied with her, whether she smiles or frowns upon him; and always thinks her either too reserved, or too coming. A kind word, that would make another lover's heart dance for joy, pangs poor Will, and makes him lie awake all night. As I was going on with Will Wormwood's amour, I received a present from my bookfeller, which I found to be *The Characters of Theophrastus*, translated from the Greek into English by Mr. Budgell.

It was with me, as I believe it will be with all who look into this translation. When I had began to peruse it, I could not lay it by till I had gone through the

whole book; and was agreeably surprized to meet with a chapter in it, intitled, *A Discontented Temper*, which gives a livelier picture of my cousin Wormwood than that which I was drawing for him myself. It is as follows.

C H A P. XVII.

A DISCONTENTED TEMPER.

A Discontented Temper is a frame of mind which sets a man upon complaining without reason. When one of his neighbours, who makes an entertainment, sends a servant to him with a plate of any thing that is nice—'What,' says he, 'your master did not think me good enough to dine with him?' He complains of his mistress at the very time she is caressing him; and when she redoubles her kisses and endearments—'I wish,' says he, 'all this came from your heart.' In a dry season he grumbles for want of rain; and when a shower falls, mutters to himself—'Why could not this have come sooner? If he happens to find a purse of money—'Had it been a pot of gold,' says he, 'it would have been worth stooping for.' He takes a great deal of pains to beat down the price of a slave; and after he has paid his money for him—'I am sure,' says he, 'thou art good for nothing, or I should not have had thee so cheap.' When a messenger comes with great joy to acquaint him that his wife is brought to bed of a son, he answers—'That is as much as to say, friend, I am poorer by half to-day than I was yesterday.' Though he had gained a cause with full costs and damages, he complains that his council did not insist upon the most material points. If, after any misfortune has befallen him, his friends raise a voluntary

voluntary contribution for him, and desire him to be merry.—‘How is that possible,’ says he, ‘when I am to pay every one of you his money again, and be obliged to you into the bargain?’

The instances of a Discontented Temper which Theophrastus has here made use of, like those which he singles out to illustrate the rest of his characters, are chosen with the greatest nicety, and full of humour. His strokes are always fine and exquisite; and though they are not sometimes violent enough to affect the imagination of a coarse reader, cannot but give the highest pleasure to every man of a refined taste, who has a thorough insight into human nature.

As for the translation, I have never seen any of a prose author which has pleased me more. The gentleman who has obliged the public with it, has followed the rule which Horace has laid down for translators, by preserving every where the life and spirit of his author, without servilely copying after him word for word. This is what the French, who have most distinguished themselves by performances of this nature, so often inculcate when they advise a translator to find out such particular elegancies in his own tongue as bear some analogy to those he sees in the original, and so express himself by such phrases as his author would probably have made use of, had he written in the language into which he is translated. By this means, as well as by throwing in a lucky word, or a short circumstance, the meaning of Theophrastus is all along explained, and the humour very often carried to a greater height. A translator, who does not thus consider the different genius of the two languages in which he is concerned, with such parallel turns of thoughts and expression as correspond with one another in both of them, may value himself upon being a faithful interpreter; but, in works of wit and humour, will never do justice to his author, or credit to himself.

As this is every where a judicious and a reasonable liberty, I see no chapter in Theophrastus where it has been so much indulged, and in which it was so absolutely necessary as in the character of the Sloven. I find the translator himself, though he has taken pains to qualify it, is still apprehensive that there may be

something too gross in the description. The reader will see with how much delicacy he has touched upon every particular, and cast into shades every thing that was shocking in so nauseous a figure.

CHAP. XIX.

A SLOVEN.

SLOVENLINESS is such a neglect of a man's person, as makes him offensive to other people. The Sloven comes into company with a dirty pair of hands, and a set of long nails at the end of them, and tells you, for an excuse, that his father and grandfather used to do so before him. However, that he may outgo his forefathers, his fingers are covered with warts of his own raising. He is as hairy as a goat, and takes care to let you see it. His teeth and breath are perfectly well suited to one another. He lays about him at table after a very extraordinary manner, and takes in a meal at a mouthful; which he seldom disposes of without offending the company. In drinking, he generally makes more haste than good speed. When he goes into the bath, you may easily find him out by the scent of his oil, and distinguish him when he is dressed by the spots in his coat. He does not stand upon decency in conversation, but will talk smut, though a priest and his mother be in the room. He commits a blunder in the most solemn office of devotion, and afterwards falls a laughing at it. At a concert of music, he breaks in upon the performance, hums over the tunes to himself; or, if he thinks it long, asks the musicians, Whether they will never have done? He always spits at random; and if he is at an entertainment, it is ten to one but it is upon the servant who stands behind him.

The foregoing translation brings to my remembrance that excellent observation of my Lord Roscommon—

None yet have been with admiration read,
But who, beside their learning, were well-bred.
ESSAY ON TRANSLATED VERSE.

If, after this, the reader can endure the filthy representation of the same figure exposed in it's worst light, he may see how it looks in the former English

version

version, which was published some years since, and is done from the French of Bruyere.

NASTINESS, OR SLOVENLINESS.

SLOVENLINESS is a lazy and beastly negligence of a man's own person, whereby he becomes so sordid as to be offensive to those about him. You'll see him come into company when he is covered all over with a leprosy and scurf, and with very long nails; and says, those distempers were hereditary; that his father and grandfather had them before him. He has ulcers in his thighs, and boils upon his hands, which he takes no care to have cured, but lets them run on till they are gone beyond remedy. His arm-pits are all hairy, and most part of his body like a wild beast. His teeth are black and rotten, which makes his breath stink so that you cannot endure him to come nigh you: he will also snuff up his nose and spit it out as he eats, and uses to speak with his mouth crammed full, and let his vitæals come out at both corners. He belches in the cup as he is

drinking, and uses nasty stinking oil in the bath. He will intrude into the best company in sordid ragged cloaths. If he goes with his mother to the soothsayers, he cannot then refrain from wicked and prophane expressions. When he is making his oblations at the temple, he will let the dish drop out of his hand, and fall a laughing, as if he had done some brave exploit. At the finest concert of music he can't forbear clapping his hands, and making a rude noise; will pretend to sing along with them, and fall a railing at them to leave off. Sitting at table, he spits full upon the servants who wait there.

I cannot close this paper without observing, that if gentlemen of leisure and genius would take the same pains upon some other Greek or Roman author that has been bestowed upon this, we should no longer be abused by our booksellers, who set their hackney-writers at work for so much a sheet; the world would soon be convinced, that there is a great deal of difference between putting an author into English and *translating* him.

Nº XL. THURSDAY, MAY 27.

—NEC TARDA SENECTUS
DEBILITAT VIRES—

VIRG.

THE bosom into which Love enters, inclines the person who is inspired with it with a goodness towards all with whom he converses, more extensive than even that which is instilled by Charity. I pretend to so much of this noble passion, as seldom to overlook the excellencies of other men; and I forgive Mrs. Page all the pangs my passion has given me, since, though I am never to have her, all other persons are become more agreeable to me, from the large good-will, the beginning of which I owe to the admiration of her. There are no excellencies of mind or body in any person that comes before me, which escape my observation, and I take great pleasure in divulging my sense of them.

I must confess, entertainments of the neighbouring theatre frequently engage my evenings. I do not take it to be a confession, that some of my papers are but paraphrases upon play-bills. I have

grown old in the observation of the feats of activity and genius for intelligent movements, which I have always loved in my old acquaintance Jo. Prince, who is to entertain us on Monday next with several new inventions, wherein he has expressed the compass and variety of his excellent talent. One of those diversions he calls The Rattle, from the Harlequin, irregular, and comic movements, with which it is performed; another, which he has termed The Looby, is performed by himself, bearing a prong; and Mrs. Bicknall, managing a rake, with as much beauty (though a little higher dancing) as an Arcadian shepherdes. The next dance he will give us, is very aptly called The Innocent, to be performed by Mrs. Younger; a genteel movement, consisting of a faraband and jig, to represent both the simplicity and gaiety of that character.

The fourth act will be followed by a
L motion

motion contrived to represent the midnight mirth of link-boys: the dance is very humorous, and well-imagined.

His play concludes with what they call a Figure Dance, performed by an elegant assembly of gentlemen and ladies; and is as much different from any of the preceding movements, as the stile of a poem is above that of a ballad.

But I must turn my thoughts from this performer to a person who has also diverted many different generations on the theatre, but in a much higher sphere; to wit, in the character of a poet. The person whom I am about to mention, is the celebrated Mr. D'Urfey, who has had the fate of all great authors, to have met with much envy and opposition; but the sagacious part of mankind ward (as soon as they begin to grow conspicuous) themselves against the envious, by representing the nobility of their birth; and I do not know why I may not as well defend the writings of my friend against the malice of critics, by shewing how ancient a gentleman he is from whom they pretend to detract. I will undertake to shew those who pretend to cavil at my friend's writings, that his ancestors made a greater figure in the world, nay, in the learned world, than their own.

MONSIEUR PERRAULT, THE FAMOUS FRENCH ACADEMIST, IN HIS MEMOIRS OF THE WORTHIES OF FRANCE, GIVES THIS TESTIMONY OF THE HOUSE OF D'URFEY.

HONORIUS D'Urfey, (says he) cadet of the illustrious house of D'Urfey, in the province of Forreft, was chosen Knight of Malta, and discharged the devoirs of his profession with all the bravery, and all the exactness, it could require.

He had two brothers, the eldest of which married the heiress of Chatteaurmorant; but the marriage afterwards being declared null, by reason of his insufficiency, he became religious, and died prior of Mountverdon, and dean of the chapter of St. John de Mountbriffon.

The second brother was master of the horse to the Duke of Savoy, and lived to be above one hundred years old.

Honorius was very much admired for many noble and witty performances; but

what principally obliges us to put him into the number of our illustrious men, was the beauty and fertility which appears with so much splendor in *Astrea*, the romance he has left us; in which are lively pictures of all the conditions of human life, in so genuine a manner, that the idea he gives of them has not only for above fifty years past charmed all France, but all Europe.

Whatever veneration we are obliged to have for the admirable poems of Homer, which have been the delight of all ages, yet, I believe, it may be said that, to consider them on the score of invention, manners, passion, and character, Monsieur D'Urfey's *Astrea*, though prose, deserves no less the name of a Poem, and not in the least inferior to Homer's. This is the judgment of very learned men, viz. Cardinal Richlieu, Mr. Waller, Cowley, &c. and those who have been very much prepossessed for the ancients against the moderns.

Of this excellent romance we mention, though finished by another, (he dying before the last *some* was written) yet he left enough from his own hand to establish his fame: nor was it found to be merely romance, but an enigmatical contexture of his own principal adventures, before he set out for his noble station at Malta, where he remained several years.

He had conceived a love for Mademoiselle de Chatteaurmorant, sole heiress of her family, beautiful, rich, and haughty, but of that noble haughtiness which is commonly inspired by great virtues. In his absence, she was married to his eldest brother, more upon a political account than any united affection, as will thus appear.

The houses of D'Urfey and Chatteaurmorant, the two greatest of the whole province, were always at enmity with one another, and their interests had divided all the nobility of the country, so that the parents on both sides were willing by this alliance to dry up the source of the quarrels and misfortunes which usually happen every moment.

D'Urfey, at his return from Malta, found his mistress married to his brother, yet still he could not cease to love her; and in all likelihood was not ignorant of his secret defect; who, after ten years marriage, confessing at last his impotence, was divorced; and then the chevalier, (obtaining a dispensation of his vow) after

after he had surmounted several difficulties, espoused Mademoiselle Chatteaurmorant.

These adventures gave occasion to those of Celadon, Silvander, Astrea, and Diana, who are the mystical images of them; divers affairs of persons of the best quality at court, in his time, having also furnished matter for the ingenious construction of the work.

So far Perrault.

Severinus D'Urfey, his near kinsman, the before-mentioned chevalier being his great uncle, for the extravagancy of his youth, or some other reason which has always been a secret to those about him, was disinherited some time before he came into England; where, being excellently well gifted in all gentleman-like qualities, though undoing all by his immoderate vice of gaming, he married a gentlewoman of Huntingdonshire, of the family of the Marmions, from whom descended Thomas D'Urfey, the ornament of this Paper.

There seems to be no blot in this pedigree, but that of the insufficiency of the gentleman who married the heiress of Chatteaurmorant; but as he could, by reason of that defect, have no descendants, the heralds of Germany, Scotland and Wales, all agree, that insufficiency in a collateral line cannot affect the heirs general: so that thus my friend and his writings are safe against the most malicious critics in this particular.

Monsieur Menage reports, that the D'Urfey's descended from the Emperors of Constantinople: on the father's side, and the Viceroy of Naples on the mother's. I shall put Menage's words, by way of advertisement, at the end of my to-day's work. This long account I have inserted, that the ignorant of Mr. D'Ur-

fey's quality may know how to receive him, when on the seventh of next month he shall appear (as he designs) in honour of the ladies, to speak an oration, by way of prologue to the Richmond Heiress.

That gentleman has so long appeared in the cities of London and Westminster, attended only by one servant, and him all along under age, that the generality have too familiar a conception of him; but it is to be hoped that the ladies, for whose sake only he appears in public, will smile upon him, as if he himself were a knight of Malta; and receive him, as if they beheld Honorius and Severinus in their professed servant Thomas D'Urfey. It is recommended to all the fine spirits, and beautiful ladies, to possess themselves of Mr. D'Urfey's tickets, lest a further account, which we shall shortly give of his family and merit, may make the generality purchase them, and exclude those whom he most desires for his audience.

EXTRACT FROM MENAGE.

MESSIRE D'Urfey se nomment Lascaris en leur nom de Family, et pretendent etre issus des anciens Lascaris, Empereurs de Constantinople. Le dernier Marqui D'Urfey, qui avoit epouse une dalegre, disoit a son fils, qui etoit exempt des Gardes—' Mon fils, ' vous avez de grands exemples a suivre, ' tant du cote paternel que maternel: de ' mon cote vos ancêtres etoient Empe- ' reurs d'Orient, et du cote de vôtre mere ' vous venes de Vicerois de Naples.' Le fils repondit—' Il fault, Monsieur, ' que ce soient de pauvres gens, de n'a- ' voir pu faire qu'un miserable exempt ' de Gardes, d'on vient qu'ils ne m'ont ' laisi ni l'Empire ni leur Viceroyaute.'

I N D E X.

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